

Nigeria to convene Sudan peace talks

LONDON (AP) — Nigeria will convene peace talks between the Sudanese government and southern rebels aimed at ending Sudan's eight-year civil war, Nigerian newspapers said Tuesday. Colonel Mohammed Al Amin Khadda, a member of Sudan's ruling military junta, was quoted as saying in Lagos that President Ibrahim Babangida, chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), had agreed to convene the talks between the Sudanese government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Col. Khadda, speaking to reporters Monday after delivering a message to Mr. Babangida from Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir, said no date had yet been fixed for the talks. Col. Khadda said Sudan's government and the SPLA were in agreement on many issues, including the need to preserve national unity, a federal system of government, the imposition of Sharia law only in areas with a Muslim majority and direct election of the president and other key officials. He said disagreement centred on matters of procedure. Col. Khadda said peace proposals would be presented to Mr. Babangida for his consideration.

Jordan Times

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Palestinians seek Arab support

TUNIS (AP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) campaigned Tuesday to talk Arab states into rejecting Israeli conditions on a Palestinian role in a Middle East peace conference. High-ranking Palestinian officials met with the ambassadors of Egypt and Jordan, key countries that have agreed to participate in the peace conference proposed by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker for October. Farouk Kaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, discussed "the international efforts deployed to this time to establish peace" with Ambassador Haydar Mahmoud of Jordan, the official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported. Hakim Balawi, another senior PLO figure, met with Egyptian Ambassador Ali Maher Essawy, Wafa reported. Mr. Balawi and Mr. Essawy spoke of a pending visit by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to Cairo, and of "the necessity of a unified Arab position against the Israeli threat to make Jerusalem Jewish," Wafa said. Israel has agreed to attend the peace conference only if the PLO has no role and Palestinians from Arab East Jerusalem are excluded. The Palestinians reject the conditions.

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King receives returnees from Kuwait

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday received a group of Jordanian expatriates who returned from Kuwait. King Hussein was reassured on their conditions and issued his directives that all needed facilities be provided to them.

Turkish bank attacked in Dortmund

FRANKFURT (AP) — A firebomb tossed into a Turkish bank in the industrial city of Dortmund early Tuesday caused extensive damage, police said. There were no injuries. It was the third attack against a Turkish bank in the industrial Ruhr River area and North Rhine Westphalia State in a week. Police said that unknown assailants broke a hole through the glass entrance of the bank in downtown Dortmund and tossed in the firebomb which exploded in flames, badly damaging office furniture and computer consoles in the ground floor office. Damage from the attack was estimated at about 100,000 marks (\$60,000), police said. Police said no one had claimed responsibility for the latest attack, but that political motives were possible. Last month officials linked a similar attack in the northern port city of Bremen to the Turkish leftist guerrilla group Dev Sol.

U.S. Report on arms sales misleading

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department has rejected as misleading a report asserting that the United States has become the chief arms supplier to Third World countries. The report by the Congressional Research Service, released over the weekend, said U.S. military exports totalled \$18.5 billion last year, up \$7.8 billion from 1989. It said Soviet weapons sales declined to \$12.1 billion from \$12.7 billion. State Department press officer Cynthia Whittlesey said the report was founded on dollar-value comparisons, which she called a misleading index. "In dollar terms, the largest share of U.S. military exports are not for weapons but for construction, spare parts, and support," she said. Ms. Whittlesey also noted that U.S. exports generally are more expensive because they are high technology. Other major exporters frequently subsidize their cost or engage in bartering, which hides the actual costs of arms transfers, she said.

Iraqi Kurdish leader undergoes kidney surgery

ISTANBUL (R) — Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani had a successful kidney operation in Istanbul on Tuesday, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said. Officials of the Admiral Bristol American Hospital said Mr. Talabani was in a satisfactory condition after the removal of a kidney stone. Mr. Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, had talks with Turkish officials in Ankara last week before being admitted to the hospital where he has had medical examinations on previous visits to Turkey.

Briton returns home after 15 years in Saudi Arabia

LONDON (AP) — A British building contractor kept in Saudi Arabia for 15 years over a dispute about commercial debts, which he denied, a Foreign Office spokesman said. The dispute involved a project Mr. Norton was involved in to build three royal palaces, the Press Association, the domestic British news agency, reported. Prime Minister John Major and Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd personally appealed to Saudi King Fahd to look into Mr. Norton's case, the Foreign Office said.

U.N. chief sees basis for prisoner-hostage exchange

GENEVA (Agencies) — U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar saw a basis Tuesday for an exchange of Middle East hostages and prisoners in a drama that had Israeli and Iranian envoys shuttling back and forth to the region. The key appeared to be the fate of seven Israeli servicemen, missing in Lebanon, who could be the crucial factor for an exchange in which some 400 Arabs held by Israel and 10 Western hostages held by groups in Lebanon would be freed. "If I could solve this problem almost everything would be solved, so I attach great, great importance to the whereabouts of the seven Israelis," Mr. Perez de Cuellar told reporters. Asked if there was a basis for a swap, he told reporters: "I think so. We know more or less what each side wants, and now it is for me to bridge the gap."

League ministers to discuss lifting of sanctions against Iraq

CAIRO (Agencies) — Arab economy ministers will discuss an Iraqi request to work for the lifting of U.N. sanctions and release of Baghdad's assets abroad when they meet in Cairo next month, a senior Arab League official said Tuesday. The agenda includes ... an Iraqi item on lifting the economic blockade imposed on Iraq and the release of frozen Iraqi funds in a number of Arab and foreign banks, the league's assistant secretary-general, Yousef Na'mallah, told reporters. The U.N. Security Council has said it would lift sanctions it imposed on Iraq following last year's invasion of Kuwait only after Iraq complied fully with Gulf war ceasefire resolutions including scrapping its weapons of mass destruction. The Iraqi proposal to the 21-member Arab League follows Baghdad's failed attempts at a conference of Islamic countries in Istanbul last week to get Muslim support to end the international economic blockade. Most Arab foreign ministers who attended the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) meeting voted against the Iraqi motions. The Arab League's Economic and Social Council will hold its first meeting since the Pan-Arab organisation moved back to its Cairo headquarters from Tunis in January. Iraq has stepped up its campaign against the year-old blockade but left the door open to a compromise on a French sanctions-easing proposal.

Unveiling of Iraqi cannon is closing chapter in supergun drama

LONDON (R) — The discovery of a giant cannon at a secret installation in northern Iraq is one of the last chapters in a drama of espionage and intrigue which could have come straight out of the pages of popular fiction. Iraq unveiled the secret weapon, a gun with a barrel around 50 metres long, to experts from the United Nations over the weekend after saying it had been trying to build an even bigger "doomsday gun."

The U.N. team travelled to an isolated spot in the northern mountains of Iraq to inspect the gun, which was described as "Assembled but not operational." The team is monitoring Iraq's compliance with the U.N. terms of the Gulf war ceasefire which require Baghdad to declare its weapons of mass destruction. The cannon will now be destroyed, putting an end to Iraq's immediate hopes of perfecting a doomsday weapon. "A fiction-writer couldn't have come up with a better story. Supergun has it all," said Henry Dadds, editor of the specialist defence publication Jane's Intelligence Review. "But this is now the end, unless Iraq has another gun hidden somewhere."

The gun was built as part of Iraq's ballistic programme "Project Babylon," which was conceived by Canadian weapons expert Gerald Bull, an artillery specialist and arms dealer found murdered at his Brussels flat in March last year. Mr. Bull was variously characterised as a mad inventor or a scientific genius. His killers have never been caught but some reports have suggested they may have been Israeli agents on a mission to sabotage Iraq's supergun programme. Weeks after his death, the supergun story broke when Britain impounded a set of steel pipes parts for a gun which could bombard Israel and any other country in the Middle East. The gun would have been bigger than any in the West's arsenal, built on the same principle as the German cannon which were able to lob shells around 130 kilometres during World War I, but on a much larger scale. Iraq denied the charges and said the cylinders, measuring more than a metre across, were ordinary pipes for the petrochemical industry. It accused the government of then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of making the whole story up to distract attention from its domestic problems. Another mysterious murder in Brussels last month, of former Deputy Prime Minister Andre Cools, has been linked to the supergun affair. Media reports say Mr. Cools, shot in the throat when he was about to get into a car with his mistress, was investigating claims Belgian officials had been involved in sending propellant for a supergun to Iraq. The actual cannon found in Iraq was probably "Baby Babylon," a prototype for the supergun proper which would have been up to 100 metres long Mr. Dadds said. The cylinders impounded in Britain were meant for the full-sized gun. Weapons experts say the gun shows Baghdad was making progress with its plan but it posed little military threat. "I'm convinced it was just a test bed. This gun rounds off the supergun story, it's not a sequel," Mr. Dadds said. The eventual supergun may have been intended to launch a spy satellite over Saudi Arabia rather than firing shells, he said. Donald Kerr, a British military analyst specialising in the Middle East, said Iraq was not really giving up very much in allowing the United Nations to dispose of the gun. "I view it more as an interesting curiosity," he said. "It was still at an experimental stage and was not really worth the money spent on it."

Disposing of the gun would be hardly more difficult than blowing up a factory chimney, he said.

OSWEGO, New York — A nuclear power plant's control room warning system lost power Tuesday and utility officials declared a site area emergency, the second-highest level of urgency under federal guidelines. No radiation was released from unit 2 at Nine Mile Point, said Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation spokesman Bob Wells. No evacuations of plant workers or residents were required, he said. Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, operators of the plant, declared the emergency at 6 a.m. (1000 GMT) because of a loss of power in control room annunciators, a system that alerts operators to abnormalities in the reactor, Wells said. The three-year-old, 1,080-megawatt plant then was manually shut down, he said. Power was restored to the annunciators by 8:30 a.m. (1230 GMT) and operators checked the system while reducing the temperature and pressure inside the reactor, a normal procedure, Mr. Wells said. Preliminary indications were that one of the plant's three outside transformers malfunctioned and overheated, causing the power loss, utility officials said. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) spokesman Frank Ingram said in Washington that the reactor will go into cold shutdown. "We are sending a team up to the site today to see why it happened," Mr. Ingram said. Mr. Wells said it was too early to tell how long the plant would remain shut down, but he said the emergency declaration was more of a procedural requirement than a true emergency. NRC spokesman John Kopeck said the declaration involves "actual or likely major failure of plant function" and the failure of the annunciators is one of the conditions that sets off the

second-highest alert at New York nuclear plant. The U.S. officials were Daniel Kurtzer, deputy assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs, Aaron Miller, a State Department policy planning staffer, and Edmund Hull of the National Security Council. The Jerusalem Post Tuesday quoted Israeli sources as saying that the thorniest point in the discussions was over Mr. Shamir's demand that the Palestinian team of negotiators not include an Arab resident of East Jerusalem. The sources quoted the Islamic Resistance as saying its fighters detonated a bomb in Kfar Hounah as an SLA jeep passed, destroying the vehicle and wounding the crew. The sources added the Islamic Resistance also claimed its new detonated a bomb in an Israeli armoured personnel carrier in Beit Yahoun. Some 1,000 Israeli troops and the 3,500-strong SLA patrol the 15 kilometres deep zone set up by the Jewish state in 1985. The second bomb wounded a

Israeli police say bomb defused in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Police said they defused a bomb planted in a gift store in central Jerusalem Tuesday. The explosives were stuffed into a piece of pipe and primed to explode, police said. The bomb was found in the store on Agrippas street, a commercial street in the heart of the Jewish sector of Jerusalem, police said. They said they were searching for a female suspect, apparently an Arab. A bomb disposal squad disarmed the device and there were no casualties or damage, police said. New methods

Israeli army chief Ehud Barak told a parliamentary committee Tuesday the army intends to turn over questioning of Palestinian detainees to the police and secret service following charges of torture. His remarks, reported by members of the foreign affairs and defence committee, followed an investigation into charges of maltreatment of Palestinians detained in the 44-month-old uprising against Israeli occupation. An Israeli human rights group had accused both the Shin Bet secret service and the army of torturing Palestinian detainees. The Shin Bet is usually responsible for questioning Palestinian detainees. But Hebrew University criminologist Stan Cohen, co-author of a booklet on Israeli maltreatment of Palestinian detainees, said soldiers, particularly at Dahariya detention centre in the occupied West Bank, have also abused prisoners. Mr. Cohen, who co-authored the study with the authoritative Israeli Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, also known as B'tselem, welcomed the army's recommendation to prosecute soldiers. The study with its plan but it posed little military threat. "I'm convinced it was just a test bed. This gun rounds off the supergun story, it's not a sequel," Mr. Dadds said. The eventual supergun may have been intended to launch a spy satellite over Saudi Arabia rather than firing shells, he said. Donald Kerr, a British military analyst specialising in the Middle East, said Iraq was not really giving up very much in allowing the United Nations to dispose of the gun. "I view it more as an interesting curiosity," he said. "It was still at an experimental stage and was not really worth the money spent on it."

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Israeli-allied militiamen shell Lebanese villages

TYRE, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli-backed gunmen retaliating for guerrilla attacks that killed a policeman, shelled three villages in South Lebanon Tuesday, wounding three people, security sources said. They said gunmen of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia fired on the villages of Ita Al Jabal, Haddata and Barasheet at the tip of Israel's self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon. Three people were wounded in Haddata and houses were damaged by the shelling. Earlier, two bombs apparently targeting Israeli forces and the SLA killed a Lebanese policeman and wounded a civilian. The first bomb exploded as a Lebanese police patrol passed through the village of Kfar Hounah, three kilometres north of the "security zone." A policeman died in the blast. The second bomb wounded a

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U.S. officials head for home from Israel

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Three U.S. officials sent to the Middle East to discuss the drafting of assurances to Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians on proposed peace talks left Israel for Washington Tuesday, Israeli officials said. The team of State Department and National Security Council officials arrived in Israel last Wednesday and met senior Israeli officials following Secretary of State James Baker's sixth Middle East peace mission since the Gulf war. They also met two Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories Friday and held talks with Jordanian officials in Amman on Sunday and Monday. On his trip to Israel Mr. Baker succeeded in getting conditional Israeli agreement by the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to attend a peace conference to be held in October and co-sponsored by Washington and Moscow. Neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians would comment on what was accomplished in the talks. But sources on both sides said the U.S. officials were only authorised to listen to the two parties and convey information to Washington. The U.S. officials were Daniel Kurtzer, deputy assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs, Aaron Miller, a State Department policy planning staffer, and Edmund Hull of the National Security Council. The Jerusalem Post Tuesday quoted Israeli sources as saying that the thorniest point in the discussions was over Mr. Shamir's demand that the Palestinian team of negotiators not include an Arab resident of East Jerusalem. The sources quoted the Islamic Resistance as saying its fighters detonated a bomb in Kfar Hounah as an SLA jeep passed, destroying the vehicle and wounding the crew. The sources added the Islamic Resistance also claimed its new detonated a bomb in an Israeli armoured personnel carrier in Beit Yahoun. Some 1,000 Israeli troops and the 3,500-strong SLA patrol the 15 kilometres deep zone set up by the Jewish state in 1985. The second bomb wounded a

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Morocco said to ban U.N. from W. Sahara

RABAT (R) — Morocco is barring from the Western Sahara a United Nations mission assigned to supervise a referendum on the territory's future, a Moroccan government source said Tuesday. The vote, planned for next year, aims to end a 15-year war by Polisario guerrillas for independence in the former Spanish colony, Morocco, which controls most of the territory and launched new military strikes last week, is unhappy with the way U.N. officials are drawing up the electoral roll. "MINURSO (the U.N. mission) can not come until the electoral roll question is settled," said an official Moroccan source who declined to be named. The Morocco-Polisario agreement to decide the mainly-desert territory's future by referendum may be in danger of unravelling. Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdelatif Filali travelled to Geneva Tuesday to discuss the peace plan with the man who fathered it, Javier Perez de Cuellar. The U.N. secretary-general said after the 90-minute meeting: "I hope that there will be no military activity that could upset the process of the referendum..." He said he was still aiming for a formal ceasefire on Sept. 6. The Moroccan minister made no statement. The first of 2,800 MINURSO troops, police and officials were due in the Western Sahara last Friday. The Moroccan Communist newspaper Al Bayan said Tuesday they would not now arrive before next Monday. An unofficial ceasefire had been in effect since November 1989. Morocco, announced last week that its forces were conducting sweeps in "no-man's land" — the region east of a defensive wall built to shield the area it controls from guerrilla attacks — to clear it of guerrillas intending to disrupt the peace plan. Polisario accused the Moroccan air force of bombing an oasis settlement near the Mauritanian border and renewing the war to keep the U.N. mission away. Neighbouring Algeria, a long-time supporter of Polisario whose improved relations with Rabat helped clear the path to the referendum plan, has expressed "profound regret" over renewed fighting in the territory and urged all sides to act responsibly. Three Moroccan opposition parties which conferred with King Hassan Saturday denounced the peace plan Tuesday, saying "the return of the Saharan provinces to the motherland is final and a referendum on the issue has no reason d'être." The statement was signed by the Nationalist Istiqlal Party, the Socialist Union of People's Forces, and the leftist Organisation of Popular Democratic Action. Spain ended its colonial rule in Western Sahara in 1976 without agreeing the territory's future with the inhabitants or pro-independence guerrillas.

Turkish attacks not limited to PKK bases

DIYANAH, Iraq (R) — The U.N. body coordinating relief work for Kurds in northern Iraq has advised aid workers to leave areas attacked in cross-border raids by Turkish troops last week.

Relief workers said civilian villages were bombed by Turkish planes, casting doubt on government assertions that its troops attacked only bases of the separatist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK).

Hagenbuchle Otto, head of the Sadiq district field office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Diyanah, said he issued the advice Sunday morning after nearly a week of Turkish air and land attacks.

Turkish military sources said the aerial attacks ended on Saturday but ground forces were continuing what they called mopping up operations.

"Normally the UNHCR is not the first one to run," Mr. Otto told Reuters in Diyanah Monday. "But under the circumstances I think we are being prudent."

The UNHCR advised aid workers to leave the valleys of Merga Sur and Sidakan, near the intersection of the Turkish, Iranian and Iraqi borders, where Iraqi Kurds and Western relief workers say villages were attacked Monday, Wednesday and Thursday last week.

Hospital officials in Diyanah said the most serious attack killed 12 and seriously wounded 15 in the village of Khera Zouk Wednesday.

They said 23 casualties had been brought to the hospital from various villages and six were still being treated.

Asia Temo, 40, whose left leg was shattered by shrapnel in the attack on Khera Zouk, said three Turkish helicopters began circling the village of about 200 people shortly after breakfast Wednesday morning.

"At first we thought they were Americans who were going to drop food to us, so we waved to them. Then they started bombing us," she said.

Three of the children were wounded in the attack which she said lasted about 30 minutes.

Relief workers who visited Khera Zouk several hours after the bombing said the village of tents and huts was burnt to the ground. They saw unexploded bombs, including cluster bombs, lying nearby.

Iraqi Kurds distance themselves from the PKK's seven-year campaign for an independent Kurdish state which has claimed some 3,200 lives.

Western relief workers and Kurdish officials cast doubt on Turkish claims that the areas attacked harboured PKK guerrillas.

"We have been operating in this area for several months and we know these two valleys quite well," said Mr. Otto. "I can state quite categorically that the village of Khera Zouk was a civilian settlement of Iraqi Kurds."

He said about 15 expatriates were working for three relief organizations, Action Nord-Sud, Action International Contre la Faim (AICF) and Equilibre, in the two valleys.

Mark Rutgers, who coordinates AICF operations in Iraq, said he and his staff were reluctant to abandon their work, even temporarily, and he was contacting his Paris office for advice.

In Diyanah hospital Hassan Aziz Khorsbid, who lived at Khera Zouk, stood by the bed of his eight-year-old daughter Jiyen. "My daughter's hand is badly damaged," he said. "My tent is destroyed and my belongings are all gone. My vegetables are in the fields. How can I return? I will leave Khera Zouk for ever."

Ankara backs down

Meanwhile Turkey backed away from plans to establish a "buffer zone" in northern Iraq to stop cross-border raids by guerrillas, but did not indicate when its troops would return home.

Turkish leaders had said they would establish a five-kilometre-deep "buffer zone" in Iraq along the 320-kilometre border.

But Defence Minister Dursun Dogu said Monday that the military incursion against the rebels had achieved its goals and that there was no firm decision now on the "buffer zone" or on when Turkish troops would withdraw.

Last week, Turkish officials were adamant that they would establish the zone to prevent cross-border raids by the rebels.

Turkey's current incursion in Ankara last Friday between government officials and senior Iraqi Kurdish leaders who opposed the incursion.

The Iraqi Kurds promised they would not permit PKK rebels to hit targets in Turkey from Iraq. Press reports said in return they got Turkish promises of food and medical assistance.

"Buffer zone is a strategic term. The important thing is the surveillance of the country's borders so as to prevent hit-and-run attacks by the enemy," Mr. Dogu said.

He did not specify whether Turkish troops would remain on Iraqi soil or whether surveillance would be carried out by reconnaissance planes or electronic means.

"The operation has ended for the time being and the targets have been attained," Mr. Dogu told reporters.

The incursion, the fourth of its kind since 1983, was said to have been triggered by a rebel raid on a Turkish border outpost that left 10 soldiers dead.

PKK is waging a guerrilla war in Turkey's 11 southeastern provinces, home to half of the country's 12 million Kurds. Over 3,000 rebels, soldiers and civilians have died so far in the fighting.

Officials said the rebels' ability to slip into neighbouring Iraq, Iran and Syria — which also have large Kurdish minorities — has prevented the military from crushing the insurgency.

Mr. Dogu said a soldier and a militiaman were killed and 13 soldiers were wounded during the incursion. He said soldiers recovered the bodies of 35 dead rebels, but he contended the guerrillas carried away scores of others killed or wounded in the fighting.

The semi-official Anatolia news agency reported that about 1,000 rebels encircled at a training camp in Iraq's Durji region had put up stiff resistance with heavy weapons.

The Turkish general staff has said about 2,000 soldiers had taken part in the operation.

Turkey has agreed to provide humanitarian aid to Iraq's Kurdish population, an Iraqi Kurdish leader announced Tuesday.

Muhsin Dizai, a representative of the Kurdish Democratic Party, told reporters here that Turkey would soon dispatch food and medicine to the Iraqi Kurds.

"We are grateful. We are suffering from the results of the (U.N.-imposed) economic embargo against Iraq," Mr. Dizai said.

Mr. Dizai held talks with officials in Ankara over the past week following Turkey's military incursion into northern Iraq.

Iraqi Kurdish leaders said at least 15 Iraqi Kurds were killed and at least 30 were wounded in Turkish air raids.

No details were available immediately about how the Turkish aid would be distributed to the Iraqi Kurds.

Also Tuesday, a Turkish Kurdish guerrilla was killed and four others were wounded in a clash with security forces in Turkey's southeastern province of Gaziantep, near the Syrian border, the Anatolia news agency reported.

U-2 spy plane flies over Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (R) — A U.S. U-2 spy plane has flown its first mission over Iraq at the request of the U.N. special commission overseeing the elimination of Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction, a U.N. spokesman said Monday.

The commission asked for the high-altitude, one-seater plane to be put at its disposal to pick out sites for inspection and ensure that Iraq is not moving equipment and material without authorization.

The commission will be given photographs of all sites and facilities surveyed by the plane at its request. A U.N. source said the aircraft was based in Saudi Arabia.

Iraq's U.N. representative is being given advance written notification to ensure the safety of the flights, the first of which was carried out at the weekend, the U.N. spokesman said.

In a letter last week to the chairman of the U.N. commission, Rolf Ekeus, complained about the planned flights, particularly the use of a U.S. plane and pilot, but said it would not place any obstacles in their way.

"Why choose an American aircraft piloted by an American pilot when everyone knows that the United States government's position is openly hostile to the government of Iraq," the letter said.

"Was it not possible to choose an aircraft and pilots from other countries, such as the Soviet Union, France or India, or from all those countries taken together, in order to ensure that the proposed mission could not serve aims other than those of the United Nations," it added.

Iraq said U.S. planes had for months been conducting reconnaissance flights and had "photographed virtually every inch of Iraqi territory."

The chief of a U.N. ballistic weapons inspection team said Monday his group had visited seven sites, including one of the notorious super cannons, and had received excellent cooperation.

"We have found only minor things that we believe have to be destroyed," said Wolfgang Buttler.

"The cooperation with the Iraqi government has been excellent. They have given us everything we have asked for, and more," he said.

He said other teams would follow his mission. However, some fixed launch sites remain to be destroyed, Mr. Buttler said, and there would be continued monitoring of Iraq's capabilities.

Mr. Buttler said that as far as he could determine Iraq had no more Scud missiles and would not have the capability to produce more after the destruction of the remaining equipment.

It fired about 80, most at Saudi Arabia or Israel, during the Gulf war.

The team arrived Thursday for a one-week inspection tour under the mandate of Security Council Resolution 687, which requires that all of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction be destroyed. That includes missiles with a range of more than 150 kilometres.

Teams specialising in the nuclear, chemical and biological fields also have made inspections here since May, but the cooperation of Iraqi authorities has been controversial for some of them, especially the nuclear teams.

U.S. President George Bush has threatened renewed military strikes unless Iraq makes a complete disclosure of its nuclear programme.

Mr. Buttler said his team had found only items related to Scud and Al Hussein missile production, such as oxidiser tanks, that must be destroyed under the terms of Resolution 687.

Sheikh Jaber: Iraq asked for one-third of Kuwait

CAIRO (AP) — Kuwait's ruler says Iraqi President Saddam Hussein asked him to give up one-third of Kuwait's territories three months before invading the emirate.

Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah made the disclosure in an interview scheduled for publication Tuesday in the Cairo newspaper Al-Ahram.

The interview conducted in Kuwait, was believed to be the first by the emir since the Iraqi invasion of his emirate Aug. 2 last year.

"I say it for the first time, that (President Saddam) asked me for one-third of Kuwait," Sheikh Jaber said in answer to a question by Ibrahim Nafeh, the newspaper's editor.

"I told him no one has such authority, not even the country's emir," Sheikh Jaber said.

The emir was unresponsive but it was his first disclosure that Iraq wanted so much territory. It had been widely known that Iraq only wanted Bubiya and Warba, two oil-rich islands on the Iraqi border.

Sheikh Jaber said President Saddam also asked for construction of oil and water pipeline between Iraq and Kuwait and when he showed approval, the Iraqi leader said:

"But I want to build some airports, housing units and schools alongside the pipelines to protect them."

President Saddam said Kuwait can use Iraqi civilian and military airports in return when Sheikh Jaber rejected his suggestion, saying his emirate would lose its independence if it allowed Iraqi airports with the Iraqi flag on its soil.

The emir said his country is small and can not be compared to its powerful neighbour.

He said the Iraqi leader made the demands in May last year when he was on a visit to Baghdad.

Sheikh Jaber said President Saddam told him not to worry much about the border problem while sending him off at Baghdad airport.

"When are you going to visit us?" Sheikh Jaber asked while boarding the plane.

"I will come to Kuwait after three months. I do not need an invitation, protocol or a date, you will know then," was the answer, according to the emir.

"You know what he meant by saying he will come to Kuwait after three months...he came just in time but with his tanks, aircraft, the military machine...the emir commented."

Hope for Iranian move

The U.N. envoy in charge of returning Kuwaiti property taken by Iraq said Monday he was optimistic Iran would return six passenger planes flown to Iran by Iraqi pilots for safekeeping during the Gulf war.

Dick Foran told a news conference talks between the United Nations, Iran and Kuwait on the return of the six Kuwait Airways Airbus planes were close to a successful conclusion.

"The matter is under discussion. I'm optimistic a satisfactory solution will be found within the next few weeks. The aspect is delicate at the moment but given the complexity of the situation talks are progressing well," he said.

The Iraqis flew the planes across the border, along with scores of military planes, after U.S. and allied warplanes destroyed many of Iraq's airports and airfields.

Iraq, which remained neutral in the Gulf war, is holding the Iraqi planes against its claims for reparations for the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88. It has not said what it intends to do with the Kuwaiti planes.

Mr. Foran said the task of returning 40 tonnes of Kuwaiti gold was moving ahead smoothly.

The transfer began on Aug. 5 and to date 2,400 bars out of a total of 3,216 had been banded over to Kuwaitis under the supervision of U.N. experts on the Iraq-Saudi border, he said.

The gold, with a value of between \$600 and \$700 million, was taken from the central bank. All the bullion had been accounted for and the last bars would be banded over on Thursday, Mr. Foran said. "There has been no discrepancy."

Apart from the gold, Iraq is also returning 63 tonnes of coins and sacks of now useless banknotes. Kuwait issued new banknotes after liberation on Feb. 28.

Once the bullion and coins are handed over, U.N. experts will oversee the return of priceless artefacts taken from Kuwait national museum. Mr. Foran said the first treasures would come home in September.

The United Nations is also checking Kuwaiti military claims against Baghdad. These include up to 300 tanks seized after the invasion last August.

Police let go Bakhtiar suspects

PARIS (AP) — French and Swiss police briefly detained two Iranian suspects of assassinating former Iranian Premier Shahpour Bakhtiar last week, but released them because the murder had not yet been discovered, French and Swiss officials said Tuesday.

The two men, believed to be members of a hit squad sent to France to kill Mr. Bakhtiar, were stopped at France's border with Switzerland by Swiss police last Wednesday because they had forged Swiss visas in the Turkish passports they carried, French police and Swiss justice department officials said.

Mohammad Azadi, 31, and Ali Rad Vakili, 32, were refused entry and later released in France as they had valid French visas, according to French police sources.

The bodies of Mr. Bakhtiar, 76, and his chief aide Feroz Khatib were found at Mr. Bakhtiar's home in a Paris suburb the next day. French coroners said the two had been dead since Tuesday night, around the same time three Iranian men, including Mr. Azadi and Mr. Vakili, visited Mr. Bakhtiar.

A taxi driver took Mr. Azadi and Mr. Vakili to the town of Sallanches in southern France Wednesday evening, according to the interior ministry.

They were last seen Friday near a train station in southern France, where they were believed to be trying to escape to Italy, the ministry said Tuesday.

There was no information on the third suspect, Farouq Boyer Ahmadi, a former Bakhtiar employee whose orange BMW was found in central Paris Thursday.

Mr. Ahmadi had access to Mr. Bakhtiar without prior appointment, and police believe he was either an accomplice in the murder or was coerced into helping the killers get into the house.

Iranian opposition figures, including former President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr and Reza Pahlavi, son of the former Shah of Iran, have blamed the killings on the Islamic fundamentalist regime in Tehran.

Iran has officially denied involvement in Dr. Bakhtiar's murder.

The Islamic Republic News Agency, monitored in Nicosia, quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Morteza Sarmadi as saying Monday reports in the West implicating Iran in the assassination were false.

"People like him have no popular base in Iran. In fact their lives pose absolutely no threat against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and their death would bring any credibility to Iran," Mr. Sarmadi said.

He said "counterrevolutionary elements" had tried to implicate Iran in the murder.

That was a reference to Iranian dissidents who have blamed Tehran for Mr. Bakhtiar's assassination.

The Iraq-based Mujahideen Khalq said in a statement that two of the three suspects were "professional killers" in the Islamic Republic Guards Corps, Iran's main army.

Mr. Sarmadi said, "Iran has always condemned terrorism categorically, and the Iranian people have been a victim of terrorism backed by some western countries." He did not elaborate.

Lebanese Anis Naccache, reportedly acting on orders from the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, led a botched assassination attempt on Mr. Bakhtiar in 1980.

Iran had reportedly insisted on Mr. Naccache's release from prison as a precondition for improving ties with Paris.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Kurds protest in Australian building

CANBERRA (R) — About 20 people protesting against the treatment of Kurds in Iraq and Turkey breached security at Australia's parliament house Tuesday. They were removed before they could chain themselves to pillars in the foyer. No arrests were made. Security officials said the group smuggled chains through made. Security officials said the group smuggled chains through made. Security officials said the group smuggled chains through made.

Kollek released after cancer surgery

TEL AVIV (R) — Teddy Kollek, the 80-year-old Israeli mayor of Jerusalem, was released from hospital Tuesday after a two-week stay following an operation to remove cancerous polyps. "The operation was successful and there is no need for further treatment," said Mr. Kollek's spokeswoman Bonnie Boxer. "He is recovering well but he needs to continue to rest. It is simply a recovery that takes time." Mr. Kollek became mayor in 1965.

Divers search for bodies of two Kuwaitis

WILLARD BAY (AP) — Divers searched Willard Bay again Monday for the bodies of a Kuwaiti mother and daughter presumed to have drowned late Saturday. Rescuers are looking for the bodies of Dalal O. Ramadan, 34, and her daughter Nada Ramadan, 7, the Box Elder County sheriff's office reported. The Ramadams, who lived in Salt Lake City, were last seen wading in the Great Salt Lake bay between 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. Saturday, authorities said. Family members called the state parks and recreation department when the mother and daughter failed to return late Saturday. Search and rescue personnel were first called to the scene at 12:30 a.m. Sunday.

Peres in mystery visit to Turkish resort

ANKARA (AP) — Former Israeli Premier Shimon Peres, the leader of the opposition Labour Party, arrived Monday on a private visit to a resort near where President Turgut Ozal is vacationing. Foreign Ministry spokesman Murat Sangar said the visit was "purely private" and that no meetings were scheduled between Mr. Peres and Mr. Ozal or any other Turkish government official. Turkey, which has had diplomatic relations with Israel since 1948, recently has been responsive to Israeli overtures to thaw relations that chilled when Israel declared Jerusalem its "capital." The brief visit by Mr. Peres also comes just days after foreign ministers of Islamic countries concluded a meeting in Istanbul. On the wings of the five-day conference, the foreign ministers of Iran, Syria and Lebanon were reported to have discussed the issue of Western hostages in Lebanon. Turkish officials also reportedly took part in some of the discussions.

Shamir to visit Bulgaria

SOFIA (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir will pay a four-day visit to Bulgaria beginning on Aug. 27, the government announced Tuesday. During his talks with Bulgarian leaders Mr. Shamir is expected to outline Israel's position before the possible convening of an Arab-Israeli peace conference, government spokesman Yassen Indzhiev said. Officials said Mr. Shamir was also expected to discuss the possibility of the transit of Soviet Jews to Israel via Bulgaria. Israel expects to receive about one million Soviet immigrants in the next five years. Like other Communist East bloc countries, Bulgaria broke off diplomatic relations with Israel after the Middle East war in 1967. After the toppling of the Communist regime in 1989, Sofia reestablished relations with Israel in May, 1990.

Turkish minister to visit north Cyprus

NICOSIA (R) — Turkish Foreign Minister Safa Giray will pay an official visit to northern Cyprus from 14 to 16, Turkish Cypriot officials said Monday. Mr. Giray will meet Rauf Denkash, leader of the breakaway Turkish republic of northern Cyprus (TRNC), and its minister of defence and foreign affairs, Kenan Atakot, to discuss recent developments towards a Cyprus settlement, they said. Turkish Cypriot leaders are preparing for a conference expected to take place in the United States in September to solve the 17-year-old dispute. Government sources in Ankara said Mr. Giray would work with Mr. Denkash to coordinate basic positions ahead of the conference called by U.S. President George Bush earlier this month. Mr. Denkash, whose breakaway state is recognised only by Ankara, insists on attending the conference as the political equal of Cypriot President George Vassiliou.

Kabul shuts independent newspaper

KABUL (R) — The Soviet-backed Afghan government has closed down an independent newspaper, Azadi (freedom), and arrested its editor, workers there said Monday. The State Security Ministry declined to comment and it was not immediately known where the Persian-language newspaper's editor, Gholam Sakhi Ghahar, was being held. Copies of the latest issue of the bi-weekly Azadi have been taken off the streets of Kabul, media sources said. Workers at Azadi's office would not give further details of its closure or the editor's arrest. Other media sources said President Najibullah's government acted against Azadi for publishing part of a speech by Pakistan-based fundamentalist guerrilla party leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and several recent critical articles. The move is likely to set back Mr. Najibullah's attempts to look acceptable to his opponents, diplomatic sources said.

Families seek release of Ethiopian ex-soldiers

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Families of soldiers detained after the collapse of Ethiopia's former government last May demonstrated outside Addis Ababa's parliament Monday to demand their release. In a city where hordes of child beggars and disabled war veterans already throng the streets, soldiers' families said they were going hungry because they had not been paid since the fall of Mengistu Haile Mariam's government. Colonel Mengistu's 500,000-strong army collapsed during fighting against the Eritrean People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and other rebel forces. Several hundred senior officers were detained after the rebels took power.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 7711-19

PROGRAMME 22

18:00 Variety programme
18:30 News in French
19:15 Varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 A Kind of Living
21:10 Silk Route of the Sea
22:00 News in English
22:20 Le Roi Mystery

PRAYER TIMES

04:29 Fajr
05:54 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:40 Dhuhr
16:20 'Asr
19:27 Maghreb
21:51 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedeb, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 62490
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 67440
De la Saule Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 62541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 68326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 823824, 659932
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675991

WEATHER

Normal summer weather will prevail and winds will be northerly to moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly to moderate and seas calm.

Amman 20 / 31
Aqaba 26 / 40
Deers 21 / 36
Jordan Valley 25 / 39

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32, Aqaba 40. Humidity readings: Amman 45 per cent, Aqaba 24 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Abdul Majid Sheer 791405
Dr. Raziq Abu Zein
Dr. Mohammed Sayeh 606460
Dr. Yousef Al Faqih 657009
First Pharmacy 661912
Perdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637025
Neitronch pharmacy 63672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsani pharmacy 637660

IBRD:
Dr. Amin Abu Tida
Al Shamsa pharmacy (278825)

ZARQA:
Dr. Salah Al Safarini
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence immediate 630341
Rescue 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 751121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 638021
Hotel Complaints 608800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone information 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdull Telephone Repairs 773111
Radio Jordan 794121
Water Authority 680100
Electricity Authority 815615

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816/6
Akhil Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2
Hussein Maternity 642816
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Samcians 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musallih Hospital 672779
The Islamic, Abdull 666127/77
Al-Ahli, Abdull 664164/6
Hafsa, Al-Muhajirin 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Amman 775111/26
Army, Marks 891611/15
Queen Alla Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
In Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hissa Modern Hospital (09) 99090

IBRD:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (05)52005, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15 Dubai (RJ)
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
08:00 Jeddah (RJ)
10:40 London (RJ)
11:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
12:00 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:00 Madrid (RJ)
18:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:00 Cairo (RJ)

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
The Al Nafces Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Jeddah (RJ)
08:00 Madrid (RJ)
10:40 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:45 Istanbul (RJ)
13:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
14:00 London (RJ)
18:00 Colombo (RJ)
21:00 New Delhi (RJ)
21:00 Riyadh (RJ)
21:30 Dhahran (RJ)
22:30 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
23:30 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
23:30 Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:55 Larnaka (CY)
08:00 Paphos (Cy)
09:15 Amsterdam (NL)
14:05 Beirut (LE)
14:05 Cairo (MS)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in US per 50

Apple 600 / 200
Apricot 700 / 200
Banana 300 / 400
Banana (Mekamun) 320 / 400
Beans 320 / 200
Cabbage 100 / 30
Carrot 100 / 200
Cauliflower 100 / 200
Corn 200 / 150
Cucumber (large) 120 / 50
Cucumber (small) 220 / 200
Eggplant 200 / 150
Garlic 100 / 70
Grape 200 / 300
Lemon (green) 300 / 200
Lemon (yellow) 400 / 200
Mango 150 / 100
Marrow (large) 120 / 50
Marrow (small) 220 / 200
Okra 200 / 150
Onion (dry) 200 / 150
Orange 400 / 300
Peach 600 / 300
Pear 600 / 300
Pineapple (hard) 200 / 150
Potato 200 / 150
Sage 600 / 300

Ministers tour southern regions, promise to address local problems

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government has decided to reduce the cost of new housing projects carried out by the Urban Development Corporation for the benefit of low income groups in the Aqaba region by 30-40 per cent, according to an announcement by Minister of Public Works and Housing Saad Hayel Srour.

The minister, who made the announcement at a meeting held here in the course of a tour of the southern regions, said that the reduction will be calculated on the overall cost of each housing unit and the difference in cost would be borne by the various government departments that provide services to the housing estates in the Aqaba region.

Mr. Srour promised to try to implement this decision on previous and new projects in the Aqaba region like those housing estates set up at Saladin and Shalaleh districts of the city.

Mr. Srour also said that his visit to the city was at the request of the local residents and in implementation of the new government's policies and directives to the cabinet ministers to make field trips to various regions and to identify the various problems. Residents attending the meeting were all beneficiaries of the Urban Development Corporation's programmes.

Minister of Tourism Abdul Karim Al Kabarti and several local officials, as well as Youssef Hiyasat, director general of the Housing Corporation and acting director of the Urban Development Corporation took part in the tour.

Mr. Hiyasat told the meeting that the reduction in the cost would be between JD 7 to JD 10 per square metre, which corresponds to the cost of the infrastructure like water, electricity, telephone and sewage networks built in the housing estates.

The cost of the infrastructure used to be added to the cost of the housing units and paid by the beneficiaries to the Urban Development Corporation, which

builds homes for low income groups.

Mr. Srour told the audience that his ministry would like to receive written requests from members of the public about improvements in their housing projects and proposals to help decision makers with their job.

The two ministers, together with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport Ali Suheimat, are touring the southern regions of Jordan to inspect areas badly hit by the storms last winter and to inspect progress on repair and reconstruction work in the region.

Mr. Suheimat visited the Aqaba port Tuesday and was briefed by local officials and heads of government departments about the various activities at the port zone.

Among the requests put to him during the tour was a demand for housing facilities for port workers who said that they could not afford the soaring cost of rent in the city.

Port Corporation Director Mohammad Semadi briefed the minister on the transit services offered by the port and the type of cargo vessels that dock in the harbour and their importance to the national economy.

Mr. Suheimat toured the port harbour area and watched the loading and unloading operations and handling at the quays. He later chaired a meeting to discuss various issues related to the Aqaba port.

At the meeting, which was attended by the ministers of public works and tourism, discussion covered urban development plans, port expansion projects requested by the local residents and workers and other relevant topics.

Mr. Kabarti told a separate meeting in Aqaba that the port city is now visited by tourist groups from Jordan and abroad. The minister said that all city hotels are booked and the beaches are crowded by vacationers.

Mr. Kabarti also said that the Ministry of Tourism was doing all it could to put Jordan and the city of Aqaba on the international tourist map.

The minister said that bookings so far indicate that the coming tourist season will be excellent. Vacationers from the Scandinavian and other European countries are among the visitors expected in the coming winter season, the minister added.

To cope with the increased tourist activity, several hotels are being built to accommodate more visitors and to open the way for tourists to spend longer time in the port city, he said.

Later, the ministers visited Karak, one of the areas directly affected by last March's rain storm which caused extensive damage to property and the infrastructure.

Mr. Suheimat told a meeting there that the government, which had earlier allocated JD 1 million for the repair and reconstruction work, was keen on enabling the southern regions to resume a normal economic life.

He told heads of local government institutions and local residents that the tour of the three ministers was designed to determine the needs of the southern regions.

Concerned government departments will repair all the water facilities and the culverts and roads and will continue in work on the Muta University faculty buildings located near Karak, Mr. Suheimat said.

For his part, Mr. Srour said that the government has now taken the first step to build the Karak Hospital at the cost of JD 14 million. He said that tenders for the designs have been awarded to a local firm and that the work on the project was expected to start soon.

The three ministers toured the Karak and the nearby Ghor Al Safi regions and met with local citizens and farmers, listening to their requests and demands.



Her Royal Highness Princess Zein hands out meritorical certificates to members of the Children's Congress (Petra photo)

Children's Congress calls for preservation of environment

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Zein Tuesday took part in a seminar held at the Royal Cultural Centre by children from Arab countries currently participating in the 11th Children's Congress, which is organised by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF).

Discussions at the seminar, which was entitled "Clean Environment is a Blessing for Life" and "The Arab Children Protect the Environment," dealt with the importance of involving children of the Arab world in protecting the environment from pollution.

Speakers presented views about ways to combat contamination and the need for team work in any endeavour connected with the protection of the environment in any Arab country.

The children issued a set of recommendations calling for the rationalisation of energy consumption, planting of trees, proper disposal of waste and economic use of water resources. They also called for the use of recycled

waste water for irrigation purposes and keeping rivers and sea shores clean.

The children appealed to the Arab people to protect the wildlife reserves and to reduce the use of insecticides and chemical fertilisers to maintain a clean environment.

At the end of the seminar, Princess Zein distributed meritorical certificates to the participating children.

NHF Director General Inaam Al Mufli was among those attending the event, which was one of the various activities carried out by the children.

Children from Iraq, Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan and Palestine are taking part in the congress activities, which were inaugurated by Her Majesty Queen Noor last Wednesday in Amman.

Other activities include visits to Jordanian families and tours of archaeological and tourist sites around the country.

Committee to conduct study on cereal, legume production

AMMAN (Petra) — Agriculture Minister Subhi Al Qasem Tuesday ordered the formation of a special committee, headed by the ministry's assistant secretary general to conduct a study on ways of promoting the production of cereals and legumes and to increase the areas of land allocated for planting such crops.

The committee will identify the areas and regions which are suitable for growing cereals and legumes, assess the quantity of seeds needed and decide on their sources.

The committee will also make recommendations on supporting farmers, increasing the area of land allocated for growing such crops and intensifying media programmes to promote knowledge about the production of cereals and legumes.

The committee is made up of the Irrid and Madaba agricultural departments' directors, the assistant director of the National Research Centre and the director of the ministry's Cereals Production Project.

Government searching for new water sources for Jordan Valley farms

AMMAN (J.T.) — The water in the King Talal Dam, which is now estimated to be 16 million cubic metres, will be mainly used to irrigate lands in the Jordan Valley to plant trees according to an announcement by Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kwar.

At present, the ministry is studying and analysing the soil of the farming units irrigated by the King Talal Dam water to advise farmers about the best type of crops to be grown with it. There are 1,500 farming units in the valley which benefit from water in the King Talal Dam, he said.

According to the minister, the water in the dam is not sufficient for irrigating all lands of the Jordan valley and water from the King Abdullah Canal will be added to it for irrigation purposes.

According to Mr. Kwar, his ministry intends to conduct a study on the quantities of irriga-

tion water available and the quantities required for the coming agricultural season in the valley so as to inform farmers about the water situation.

The minister stressed that the water in the King Talal Dam was not polluted and was fit for agricultural use.

Referring to the dams in Jordan, Mr. Kwar said that the ministry has already awarded tenders to build the Rajel Dam at the cost of JD 1 million and is planning to construct earth dams in four regions in cooperation with the Engineering Corps of the Armed Forces.

The minister said that the four regions are located at Qaa Al Jinz in Karak, Qaa Al Hassa in the Tafleh region, Wadi Maan in the governorate of Maan and Wadi Al Harth in the Zarqa area.

Two work teams have already been set up, one to work in the eastern regions and the other in the south to pave the way for the

construction of the dams in the coming two weeks, the minister said.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation plans to harvest winter water and for this reason is purchasing JD 1 million worth of equipment and three water drills to find new water sources.

The ministry is studying the prospect of raising the walls of the Kafrein Dam in the Jordan Valley to collect more rain water for the dry season and another study is being conducted to install water pumps that would help feed the Ziqlab Dam, Mr. Kwar said.

He said that the ministry is expanding the Karameh Dam, also in the Jordan Valley, to collect 55 million cubic metres of water for the dry season irrigation operations.

According to the minister, contacts are under way to raise funds to finance the Wadi Al Mujib, Wadi Al Walah and Tannour dams.

Meeting reviews successes of police assistants experiment

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Security Department (PSD) Director Maj. Gen. Fadel Ali Fuheid chaired Tuesday a meeting at the Royal Police Academy.

The meeting was held to discuss the traffic police assistants experiment, which was started six months ago as well as problems affecting it.

Maj. Gen. Fuheid expressed his thanks for and pride in the traffic police assistants force, which comprises citizens who volunteered to help the traffic police in monitoring traffic movement and violations in response to a call by the PSD.

The PSD director said the issue of confronting traffic problems is the duty of every citizen and should not be restricted to the

traffic department "because regardless of the capabilities of the department, it will not be able to prevent all traffic violations unless it is supported by members of the society."

Reckless driving and violations of traffic regulations and laws is a phenomenon that is starting to spread because of the remarkable increase in the population.

This, he added, required stepped up efforts to confront those negative aspects so as to minimise losses that might result because of them.

He stressed the need to discuss and assess the experiment of the traffic police assistants to enhance their positive role in society.

Chairman of the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents Zuhair Malhas reviewed in the meeting the role of the society since its establishment 16 years ago. He also discussed its cooperation with the state departments, particularly the PSD, which supported the society in carrying out its duties.

One of society's duties, Dr. Malhas said, was helping the concerned authorities in enforcing traffic laws and regulations.

He said that the society's efforts succeeded this year with the help of the traffic police assistants, who also help in issuing traffic tickets and in defining the sort of violations which take place in the absence of policemen.

Public prosecutor investigating couple for falsifying documents

AMMAN (J.T.) — The public prosecutor is investigating a fraud case involving a couple working for the Social Security Corporation (SSC), according to a report in Al Dusour Arabic daily.

The couple, who were married three months ago, succeeded in acquiring JD 8,000 by illegal means through issuing a cheque in the name of a lady who has never requested her compensation from the SSC.

The case began early this year but was not revealed until recently, when a lady in charge of examining compensation settlements and transactions noticed a cheque in the amount of JD 8,000 in the name of a friend of hers.

Upon seeing it, she immediately called her friend to tell her that there was a cheque for her and inquired about the reasons for her friend asking for her compensation.

She was surprised to hear that she did not request her compensation and was told that the lady involved in the fraud had taken her family registration book from her.

She asked her to call SSC Director General Mohammad Al Saqqaf and inform him what happened to her. Upon hearing that, Mr. Saqqaf referred the case to Amman Governorate Police Department.

House, Senate to discuss laws

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament holds a session today under the chairmanship of its speaker, Abdul Latif Arabiyat.

The House will discuss a number of laws referred to its various committees, including the Revised Banks Law, the Royal Jordanian Revised Law, the Central Bank of Jordan's Revised Law No. 19 for the year 1979 and the CBI Law No. 4 for the year 1975.

The session will be attended by Prime Minister Taher Masi and the Cabinet ministers.

The Upper House will also meet Thursday under the chair-

manship of its Speaker Ahmad Al Tayari to discuss a number of draft laws referred to it by the Lower House.

The Upper House will also look into two decisions taken by its Joint Legal and Financial Committee on the Provisional Law No. 11 for the year 1990 concerning Royal Jordanian and the provisional law on the Jordanian Investment Corporation. Both laws were referred to it by the Lower House.

Thursday's session will also be attended by the prime minister and the Cabinet ministers.



Abdul Latif Arabiyat

Firm to conduct study on water treatment plant

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Murtaz Bilbisi Tuesday signed a contract with an American engineering firm to conduct a study on the possible expansion of the Khirbet Al Samra Waste Water Treatment Plant.

The study, to be conducted by the firm of Engineering Science Inc. in cooperation with the Consulting Engineers Centre at an estimated cost of \$417,500, will review the current systems of water treatment at the plant, its capacity and the possible expansion of the plant to serve the greater Amman area through the year 2000, according to Jim Dempsey, acting director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

USAID, through a reimbursement grant to the Jordanian government, will finance the study, he said.

"One of the key areas of USAID assistance worldwide is to help assist in the protection of the environment," Mr. Dempsey said. "We see this as

an important step in protecting the water running through the Zarqa basin and the King Talal Dam."

In addition to establishing the feasibility of an expansion programme, the study will assess the environmental effects of the system and recommend design improvements to increase the efficiency of the existing ponds.

The study, to be conducted in two stages, will begin in about a month and is expected to take about 17 months to complete, Mr. Dempsey said.

The waste treatment plant at Khirbet Al Samra was designed to process about 67,000 cubic metres of waste water per day, Mr. Dempsey said. The greater Amman area currently generates between 100,000 and 110,000 cubic metres of waste water per day, he said.

"We're expecting to come up with a design that would enable the plant to process waste water at a level expected in the year 2000," Mr. Dempsey said.

The actual expansion of the plant is expected to cost between \$5m and \$10m, depending on the design of the expan-

sion and the technology used, he said. The plant, largely through local financing, originally cost about \$50m to construct, he added.

While no organisation has offered to help the Jordanian government finance the expansion of the plant, the World Bank has expressed some interest in the programme, Mr. Dempsey said.

In addition, USAID is "considering stepping in and offering money when the study is completed," he said.

The waste water treatment plant has been a source of controversy in recent months as residents have complained of fumes emanating from the facility. Waste water leaking from the plant and seeping into underground water has caused several cases of dysentery, doctors in the area have said.

Addressing these concerns, Mr. Dempsey said that the facility, if expanded and upgraded technically, should be more efficient and be able to better treat waste. Also, the water that will be released by the plant into the Zarqa River will be clean, reducing the health hazards, he said.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King condoles Dr. Khawad's family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday called at the house of the late Dr. Hamed Khawad, former acting director of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) Regional Office in Amman, who was killed in his office Sunday, and offered condolences to his family. The King also visited the Sudanese ambassador in Amman and offered condolences over the death of Dr. Khawad. Later, the King visited the two UNESCO officials at King Hussein Medical Centre who are now being treated for the wounds they sustained during the attack on Dr. Khawad.

King congratulates Pakistan

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Pakistani President Ghulam Ishaq Khan congratulating him on his country's independence day. The King expressed his best wishes to the Pakistani president and wished the Pakistani people further progress and prosperity.

Obeidat named envoy to Algeria

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's newly appointed Ambassador to Algeria Dr. Khalid Obeidat Tuesday left for Algiers to take up his new post there. Before his appointment to this post, Dr. Obeidat was the director of the Political Department at the Foreign Ministry.

Equestrian show to be held

AMMAN (Petra) — Youth Minister Saleh Ershaidat Friday will attend an equestrian show, to be held at the Arabian Horse Club to mark His Majesty King Hussein's birthday. The show includes a riding demonstration, tent pegging and show jumping. The event is organised by the National Equestrian Committee, in cooperation with Hotel Jordan Intercontinental.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of traditional embroideries and hand-made items at the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Rihab Al Nammary at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Hassan Al Shishani at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Lower House to review budget

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government has referred to the Lower House of Parliament a supplement to the 1991 Fiscal Budget to be reviewed and endorsed.

According to the supplementary budget, the total amount of revenues expected will reach JD 126.5 million while expenditures will be about JD 49.7 million.

The difference, which is considered a surplus saving, is to be used to reduce the deficit in the 1991 Fiscal Budget which amounts to JD 206.7 million, according to Minister of Finance Basel Jaraneh, who presented the supplementary budget to Parliament.

According to Mr. Jaraneh, revenues are expected to come from an improvement in the economic sector and fees charged on dealings with real estate now that the Gulf crisis is over as well as fees and extra customs duty collected on imports and from issuing licences.

The minister said that other revenues will come from the financial aid coming from friendly nations to compensate Jordan for losses caused by the Gulf crisis.

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Reality in peace

EXCEPT FOR some exceptionally brave words from His Majesty King Hussein on the need to establish Arab-Israeli peace, and for the arrest of an armed fundamentalist group threatening the security of the state, Jordanians have been marking the weeks leading up to the October Middle East peace conference quietly and reflectively. We do not seem to know what to expect from the historic and momentous change that is closing in on us.

The technical team of experts that the U.S. administration has sent to the area to draw up memoranda of understanding on the planned conference was in Amman on Aug. 11 and 12 having visited with the Israelis and West Bank Palestinians. They went back to Israel and the occupied territories and then headed for home with neither side saying anything about the substance of the discussions. The kind of officials they talked with here, however, suggests that technical issues rather than matters of principle were tackled. Technicalities probably involve the names of Palestinian delegations in the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, its make-up and function, letters of understanding between the U.S. and Arabs and Israelis; but they apparently have more to do with the organisation of the conference itself and subjects to be discussed at that forum than anything else.

The pace of developments preceding the parley has been so quick that a senior Jordanian official had to admit that "we could hardly cope with it." This probably explains the Jordanian and Palestinian quiet and reflective mood over the peace issue so far, though it leaves many questions unanswered about the post-October period.

The official Jordanian thinking is that the conference should be held because it is the last realistic opportunity to solve the Palestinian problem and the wider Arab-Israeli conflict. Except for ceding over half of Palestine to the Jews legally (recognition of Israel) and some Arab legitimate rights (if 242 is not fully implemented and a Palestinian state is not created), Jordan has much to gain and little to lose from realising a solution. At stake is not only continued strife and violence and the spread of extremism and fanaticism in the region generally, if the no-war, no-peace situation carries on. Greater economic problems, more acute water shortages and the total loss of what is left unappropriated of the Israeli-occupied Arab territories will also be the result.

Jordan, comfortable in the belief that there is no practical alternative to joining the peace process, whose future is uncertain at best, is aware of the opposition from the ultranationalists on the left and the Islamic fundamentalists on the right. Furthermore, it recognises the Arab position's weakness in the aftermath of the Gulf war and the dilemma posed in Palestinian and other Arabs by the exclusion of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) from playing a direct role in peace efforts and talks. But what choice does any Arab have of recovering the occupied territories if we are not willing to join this peace offensive, especially when the military option is out for now and most probably for a long time to come?

Back in the early eighties, Jordan was seeking from the Reagan administration a written guarantee that 242 would be implemented in full if Jordan accepted the Reagan peace plan of 1982. Today Jordan does not have that guarantee, but we do have assurances from the Americans that their interpretation of 242 and 338 is very close to the Arab side's understanding of the two U.N. resolutions, and that U.S. representatives to the Arab-Israeli negotiations will adhere to this interpretation when talks on any particular problem reach a deadlock.

At a joint press conference with the U.S. Secretary of State, James Baker, when they concluded talks in Amman on Aug. 2, the King said that "unprecedented progress" had been made in peace efforts but he must have been mainly referring to the question of Palestinian representation when he said that much work still needed to be done before the concerned parties arrived at the negotiating table.

That question needs to be answered, and we are both hopeful and confident that the PLO will place the higher interests of its constituents, the Palestinian people, above everything else. This should not be seen as another attempt to put pressure on the PLO, for both Jordanians and Palestinians are in on this together and as it is we all have enough pressures to cope with. What is earnestly needed is for everybody to rise to the level of responsibility that would ensure for coming generations the kind of future that we ourselves aspire to.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

TWO months have passed since the endorsement of the National Charter but nothing has been done to put the charter into force, said Al Ra'i daily Tuesday. The charter was worked out by representatives of various political forces and groups and it was endorsed by the representatives of the people of Jordan in a national congress, said the paper. The charter was considered to be the first step towards finalising the process of democracy and political pluralism in the country, paving the ground for the creation of political parties which the government has approved and passed on to Parliament for endorsement, the paper noted. Therefore, it is difficult to see Parliament delaying the endorsement of the charter's two main laws: those on press and publications and the political parties, the paper stressed. We fear that the fruit of the hard work that yielded the charter would go down the drain should Parliament oppose any move towards implementing its various articles, especially those related to the political parties and the press and publications laws, the paper said. The paper expressed fear that Parliament could pass the two laws in such a manner that would not be in harmony with the spirit of the charter which was blessed by the Jordanian people's congress and added that any move in this direction would be harmful to the democratic process in the country. Any negative attitude towards the National Charter on the part of the Parliament, the paper stressed, would be in total disregard of the people's will.

As was expected from the Islamic countries' foreign ministers conference, which last week ended in Istanbul, the meeting accomplished nothing of benefit to the Islamic World, said a columnist in Al Ra'i daily Tuesday. Since this conference was of no use to the Muslims, it is considered as illegitimate, Salamah El-Khour said. The writer noted that most of those who took part in the conference sided with the U.S.-NATO alliance, which is in alliance with Israel, a common enemy to the Arab and Islamic countries. This conference, which claimed to represent 1,000 million Muslims on earth, was supposed to deal with issues of concern to the Muslims and the holy Islamic places, but unfortunately it was transformed into a tool to serve the interests of the United States and its allies in the region, the writer stressed.

Economic Forum

Investment is the key to revitalising economy

AN objective scrutiny of the record of the Jordanian economy during the last three to four years would reveal that the only visibly concrete positive achievement of our economic policy was, despite all appearances, the stabilisation of the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar. In a very negative sense, one can add the stemming of economic deterioration as another achievement. Obviously, this second achievement will be meaningless if it does not serve as a springboard for more positive achievements.

One honestly hopes that the sharp increase in tax rates, especially income tax, which was initiated in the last quarter of 1989, would not be treated as a credit item. And probably nobody will want to list the rescheduling of our external debt as an achievement. Debt rescheduling works in favour of the creditor more than in favour of the debtor. If bankruptcy or nonpayment is the alternative to rescheduling, the creditor will stand to lose everything, rescheduling is the only hope for him to salvage anything from the wreckage.

The alarm of this harsh fact (only a single positive achievement) has to be sounded strongly now because there seems to be a great deal of complacency among the managers of our economic policy. Obviously, if we keep on telling ourselves that we are geniuses, we will end up believing that and tend to overrate ourselves and our achievements and simultaneously underrate our problems. At a time of stringency as the one we have right now, this is a recipe

for almost guaranteed economic ruin. We could have a look at what we have in the economic arena.

Unemployment is mounting and hitting record highs not only by Jordanian standards but also by world standards. Costs of living are high in themselves, and very high in comparison to the real income, which stagnated during the last four years. Our economic managers try to ignore the costs of living, that is the general price level, by focusing their attention and that of observers on the inflation rate itself, i.e. on the speed at which costs of living climb up. Even this manoeuvre is not working and should not fuel complacency because the rate of inflation has been higher than wage increases in the recent past.

A combination of rising and spreading unemployment and high costs of living running for years must be duly seen as a formidable potential menace to social and political stability. The vicious circle of unemployment and high costs of living is corroborated by sluggish economic growth. During the period under study, our real growth rate was either negative or very low. To break this vicious circle economic growth must be greatly propelled as to provide hope for dampening high costs of living and generating jobs in numbers adequate at least to stem unemployment at its present levels as a first step.

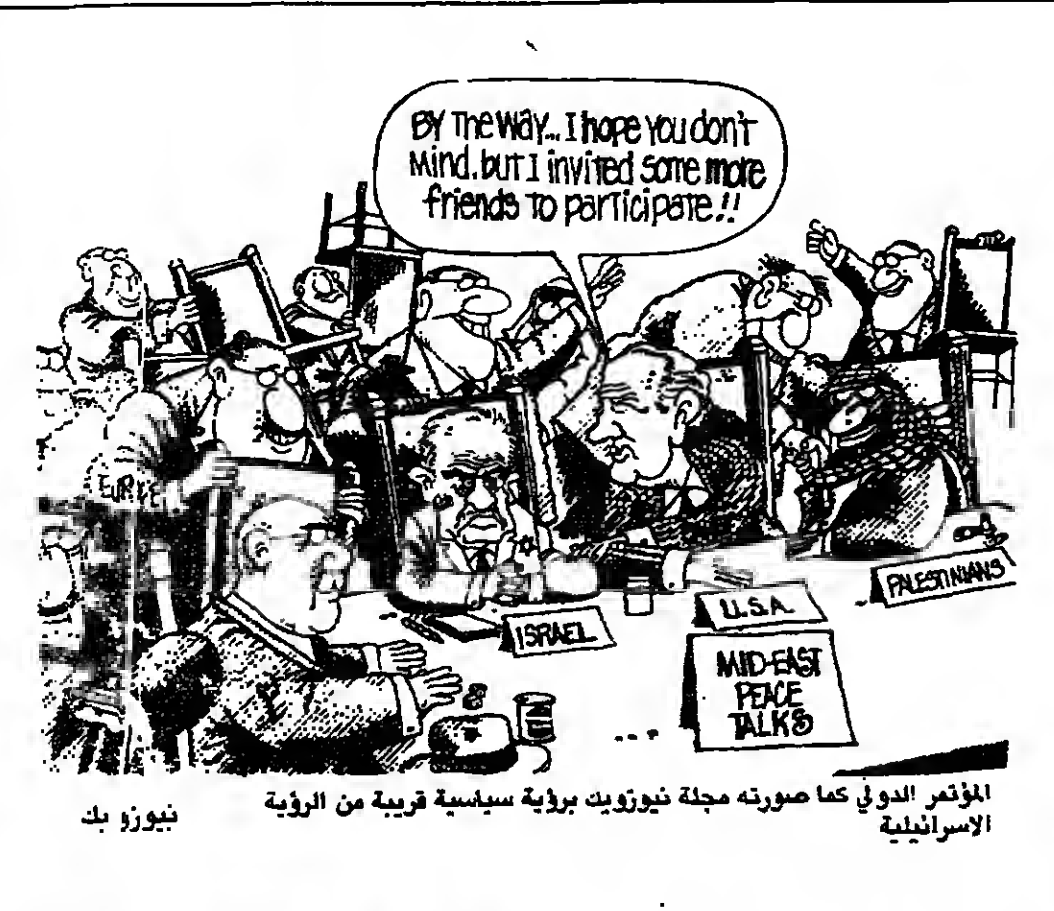
To attain growth that is capable of doing that, we have to have a great investment boom (not, for example, tax boom). This boom

is the key word in our present economic mess. The current economic policy does not seem to be heading in this direction. If anything, it is indeed heading in an opposite way while Jordanian officials seem to be happy with that. This is what we call a state of dangerous complacency.

We did succeed in postponing the payment of our external loans. We stopped economic deterioration. But we have to move forward. In a moment of truth, or untruth, we thought that what was wrong with our economy was merely a set of distortions, such as an "overvalued" dinar, administratively-controlled interest rates, and subsidised prices of two or three commodities. We smashed the Jordan dinar by 50 per cent, floated interest rates, hiked taxes and diluted price subsidies or removed them. But that did not work as we still have the three economic evils of unemployment, inflation and deficient growth. That was not the recipe because those "distortions" were not the disease and the whole diagnosis was wrong. To our mind, the recipe is investment and more and more of it.

At this juncture, the necessary investment revolution in Jordan can be achieved only through unprecedented economic liberalisation. Most of our economic policy measures have been either futile or self-defeating because they have distorted the investment climate or, at best, had nothing to do with it. It is high time for a change.

By Dr. Abdalla Mahki



Palestinians seek American clarifications, guarantees

By Dan Izenberg

PALESTINIAN leaders are putting on a brave and defiant face on the eve of crucial talks with American negotiators which could determine the fate of the Mideast peace process.

As they well know, the Americans will have a difficult time bridging the diametrically opposed positions of the Israeli government and the Palestinian leadership.

Key figures in East Jerusalem say one of their biggest fears is that the U.S. will sign two contradictory memoranda of understanding to bring both sides to the negotiating table, while at the same time sowing the seeds of future confusion and war.

What they are insisting on are clear U.S. statements, in writing, on five basic demands which they describe as minimal conditions. However, they refuse to say whether the demands are minimal conditions for attending the talks or, as some have put it with deliberate vagueness, minimal conditions for guaranteeing the success of the talks.

The following are the issues and the answers the Palestinians want to hear from the Americans.

— Designation of the Palestinian delegation: al Najah University political scientist Saeb Erakat makes no bones about it. "The PLO has the right to choose who will negotiate for the Palestinians," he says. "It will be the only body to choose the representatives."

Mr. Erakat says "the mere talk" of an Israeli veto over the choice of Palestinian delegates is "humiliating, ridiculous and absurd. There has never been a situation in the history of conflict resolutions in which two enemies are about to sit down to make peace and one side chooses his own representatives and those of his enemy."

The Palestinians add that the PLO must be recognised as the referent of the Palestinian negotiators so that the delegates can refer any questions that arise during the talks to the PLO in Tunis.

— East Jerusalem: The question of appointing a Palestinian representative to the delegation is linked to Palestinian insistence in general on their right to choose their own people. But, just like Israel's leaders, the Palestinians claim that the fate of the city is the most sensitive issue in the talks. "Jerusalem is like the heart of the Palestinians," says Radwan

Abu Ayyash, former head of the Arab Journalists' Association and one of the local mainline pro-PLO leaders. The Palestinians insist that by banning an East Jerusalem representative from the talks, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is trying to decide the issue in advance and exclude it from negotiations altogether.

— The substance of the talks: The Palestinians want the Americans to give them concrete assurances that they interpret U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 as meaning land for peace with regard to all the territories captured by Israel in the 1967 war. "Shamir knows it's either land or peace," Mr. Erakat says. "So when he says 'not one inch of land,' he's fooling either himself or the Israeli public, but he sure isn't fooling any Palestinian."

According to Mr. Abu Ayyash, the Palestinians do not need a peace conference to discuss improving their living conditions under occupation. "We can go to Danny Rothchild (coordinator of activities in the administered territories) any time to ask for permission to build a few more factories in the West Bank and Gaza," Mr. Abu Ayyash says. "We don't need Baker for that."

The transitional period: A key Palestinian fear is that Israel will perpetuate the transitional period of autonomy during which it is accepted by all sides that it will continue to maintain overriding control of the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinians want international guarantees that this will not happen.

They also want a clear delineation of the phases to be carried out during the transitional period, and they expect these phases to provide an ever increasing degree of independence for the residents of the territories including control over water, land, the economy, education, internal security and freedom from arrest by Israeli soldiers.

— Jewish settlements: The Palestinians want Jewish settlements stopped immediately. "Such a difficult peace process requires time," Mr. Abu Ayyash says. "We can't compete with the bulldozers of Arik Sharon or the flow of settlers into the occupied territories. Our aim is not to discuss autonomy of people only, but also sovereignty over the land and its natural resources. The settlements continue to create new geographical facts."

It should come as no surprise that Mr. Shamir's decision to

attend the peace conference has not softened Palestinian attitudes towards him. They mistrust him and his motives as much as ever.

"Until two weeks ago, Shamir was saying no to the peace conference until such and such conditions were met," says Mr. Erakat. "Today, Shamir is saying yes to the peace conference if the same conditions are met. The Americans have decided to accept this as a yes. I don't know who the hell is fooling who. Either Israel is fooling the U.S. or the U.S. is fooling Israel."

"Peace requires nothing more than a genuine desire, sanity and statesmanship," continues Mr. Erakat. "As evident from Shamir's games, he lacks all three."

The bottom line of the Palestinian assessment is that Mr. Shamir wants peace with Syria but not with the Palestinians. They also fear that he has found a willing partner in President Hafez Al Assad.

"Shamir is looking for Camp David II," Mr. Abu Ayyash says. "Camp David I neutralised Egypt through peace. Camp David II neutralised Iraq through war. Now they want Camp David III with Syria. The Syrians had two alternatives to choose from. They have chosen the Egyptian."

As they describe the situation, the Palestinians make it sound as though they are largely dependent on the goodwill of the Americans. Although some leaders give President George Bush higher marks for "fairness" to the Palestinian than his predecessors, they all express wariness regarding U.S. intentions.

"So far," Mr. Erakat says, "the Bush administration has sided with Israel. That's a fact. The Palestinians realise how one-sided the U.S. position is and it will show very soon, if the Americans decide to accept Shamir's demand to exclude East Jerusalem from the talks."

What indeed will happen if the U.S. refuses to meet the Palestinian demands? Will they stay away from the talks? Mr. Abu Ayyash and Mr. Erakat do not rule out the possibility.

"I do not think the Palestinians are in a take-it-or-leave-it situation," Mr. Erakat says. "What we want is genuine peace." According to Mr. Abu Ayyash, "It is obvious that the Palestinians are not rejecting the peace process. We are saying we are willing to come if our minimum national demands are met." — The Jerusalem Post.

Hostage release reflects winds of change in Mideast diplomacy

By Tom Rasm
The Associated Press

KENNEBUNKPORT — It wouldn't have been likely a year ago: The U.S. president publicly praising Syria, Lebanon and even Iran. But President Bush did just that Sunday in hailing the release of hostage Edward Tracy.

Relations between the United States and these former U.S. antagonists are in transition, reflecting new political realities and alignments in the Middle East in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

"I'd like to express our appreciation to the government of Iran, which used its influence with the Lebanese groups involved in order to gain the unconditional release of these hostages," President Bush told reporters.

"And our thanks also go out to the governments of Syria and Lebanon, both of which have facilitated this release," said the president, discussing the hostage situation as he continued a summer vacation at his oceanside resort here.

Although U.S. relations with Tehran are still rocky and remain strained with Lebanon, the most dramatic change has come in the U.S. attitude toward Hafez Assad's Syria.

In fact, the first White House statement confirming Tracy's release credited the Syrian government with informing the United States of the development. And even though Tracy initially was released in Beirut, he was taken to Damascus by Syrian officials to achieve his full freedom.

U.S. officials credit President Assad with helping to handle the release of Tracy. And they have voiced pleasure with his agreement last month to a U.S. formula for Middle East peace talks — a decision which broke a logjam and led finally to the Israeli agreement in principle to join the talks.

U.S. officials credit Syria's decision to join the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq a year ago with

going a long way toward warming relations between the two states.

The deteriorating influence of the Soviet Union on the world stage — and improving relations between Washington and Moscow — also helped speed the process.

In a bold move, and one that was viewed with some alarm by Israel, President Bush met in Geneva last November with President Assad to discuss the Gulf crisis.

It was the first time a U.S. president had met with a Syrian head of state in more than a decade. And since that meeting, relations with Syria have steadily improved.

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Sunday that the president took deliberate care in separating his thanks to Iran for using "its influence" and his praise for Syria and Lebanon for having "facilitated this release."

"The president believes that Iran is still the main country with influence over the hostage-takers," the official said.

President Bush feels the governments of both Syria and Lebanon genuinely want to see the Western hostages released, but that Iran remains ambivalent, the official said.

For his part, President Bush said: "The Iranians will say that they're not holding these people and, indeed, I think they have been helpful here. But to be really helpful, we'd like to see the release of all these Americans." The president said relations with Iran cannot be normalised until the remaining hostages are freed.

The differences were underscored on Sunday by Kamal Kharazmi, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations. Appearing on CBS' "Face the Nation," he said that Israel, not Iran, holds the key to assuring that remaining Western hostages are released.

"We have limited influence," he said. And, while he said his government wanted to be helpful

in seeing that more hostages are released, "we understand that (a) hostile policy is exercised by United States against my country."

The United States has full diplomatic relations with Syria and Lebanon, but deals with Iran only through third parties, principally the Swiss government.

The Arab coalition assembled by Bush and Secretary of State James A. Baker III to confront Iraq dramatically changed historic alignments in the Middle East. No longer was the United States identified almost exclusively with Israeli interests in the region.

In fact, President Bush seemed to go out of his way to suggest that Israel also release prisoners that the Arab World considers to be hostages.

"I'm saying everybody that is held as a hostage should be released by every country, whichever it is," he said.

President Bush said he didn't know the exact reason why Tracy was released by the group calling itself the Revolutionary Justice Organisation, even though he noted playfully: "I know a little more than I'm saying."

But the president said he believed that the improving mood for peace in the area was a contributing factor.

"I think if there's any overall blanket kind of reason to be optimistic, it might be that people around the world see that there's a good chance that ancient enemies will sit down and talk peace," President Bush said. "And perhaps that is encouraging, this forward motion."

Even so, Mr. Bush said he didn't want to express too much satisfaction, since five Americans are still being held in Lebanon and the situation remains so volatile.

"This situation is so fluid that none of us can keep up with it, and Lebanon is a long way away," said Peggy Say, sister of the longest-held hostage, chief AP Middle East correspondent Terry Anderson.

Yugoslav settlement talks still a long way off

By Richard Balmforth
Reuters

BELGRADE — Yugoslavia's future remains fraught with uncertainty as a ceasefire between armed Serbs and Croats in rebel Croatia teeters on the brink of collapse.

The crash of mortars and the rattle of gunfire echo nightly across Croatia's hills, valleys and cornfields despite the truce declared by federal leaders on Aug. 7.

On Saturday night two men were killed in mortar attacks by Serbs opposed to Croatia's bid to secede from the federation.

The nationalist leaderships of Croatia and Serbia — the latter holding a stronger hand after territorial gains by better-armed Serbian fighters — refuse to back down from irreconcilable stands.

Political talks among Yugoslavia's six feuding republics, a logical next step if the ceasefire holds, seem doomed from the start.

"Everybody agrees Yugoslavia cannot remain what it is now. But getting talks going in the present climate is going to be very hard," said a diplomat in Belgrade.

"The 'who, where and when' is what nobody is talking about." At least 300 people have been killed in Yugoslavia since Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence on June 25, incurring the wrath of Serbia, the biggest republic.

More than 200 of them have died in Croatia, where militia from the 600,000-strong Serbian community, staunchly nationalist, have clashed with police and national guardsmen.

The Serbs' gains have left them firmly in control of the Krajina region, a wedge in the heart of Croatia where Serbs have declared their autonomy, and of parts of eastern Croatia.

Croatia says Serbia, led by President Slobodan Milosevic, is using the rebels and the federal army to fulfil a dream of creating a greater Serbian state.

Yugoslavia's collective presidency is pressing ahead with attempts to enforce the Aug. 7 truce against all the odds.

Ceasefire commission officials have set up crisis centres in flash-point areas. Exchanges have begun of prisoners taken in six weeks of fighting.

As part of follow-up steps under the ceasefire, Serb community leaders are once more talking to Croats — vital if any mutual trust is to be restored in Croatia's badlands.

But a minefield of sensitive negotiations lies ahead of ceasefire commission officials. One spark could reignite large-scale violence.

Many armed units have refused to withdraw out of range of their enemy's guns, let alone disarm. Croatia will be reluctant to scale down its forces while Yugos-

lav army units remain deployed around the republic.

Federal authorities sent the army in to act as a buffer but Croatia says it has helped Serb guerrillas and it wants the federal troops back in barracks.

Croatia holds few cards, however. President Franjo Tudjman is not happy with the terms of the truce but he dare not pull the rug out from under it.

That could lose Croatia the support of the international community, which it needs to exert pressure on Serbia.

The European Community and the 35-nation conference on security and cooperation in Europe say they are prepared to continue playing a part in shoring up peace efforts.

Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Markovic says a summit of the eight-member presidency and the heads of the federations' six republics and two provinces could be a next step. But all previous summits of the type collapsed in mutual bickering.

Croatia's problem is how to force Serbs to relinquish the territory they have seized.

Tudjman has vowed Croatia will not yield an inch of land at the negotiating table nor compromise in its determination to break out of the Balkan federation.

Serbia, led by hardliner Slobodan Milosevic, says it will not block Croatia's secession.

Arab League ministers to discuss Iraq sanctions

(Continued from page 1)

that Iraq eventually accepted the Security Council ceasefire which orders it among other things to scrap its weapons of mass destruction and pay the emirate and others massive compensation.

"They said they considered that resolution to be unjust, not even-handed," but still they accepted it," one said.

Britain said Tuesday it will not release Iraqi banknotes printed in Britain before sanctions were imposed but reiterated its willingness to unfreeze some Iraqi assets

in return for the release of a jailed Briton.

The Foreign Office said in a statement Britain would release "significant assets for humanitarian purposes," if Iraq freed businessman Ian Richter. Mr. Richter has been jailed in Iraq for five years on bribery charges.

A Foreign Office spokesman denied that Britain had changed its policy of not doing deals over "hostages" or other detained nationals.

"We are not haggling over the future of an innocent individual.

We are talking about using leverage," a Foreign Office spokesman said.

There was no immediate word on the amount of Iraqi assets frozen in Britain or the amount Britain would be prepared to release.

Iraq's Minister of state for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Said Al Sahaf, hinted Monday that Iraq might be prepared to release Mr. Richter if all assets and Iraqi banknotes printed in Britain were freed to relieve conditions the Iraqi people face because of the continued sanctions.

America needs the Democrats to think creatively

By E.J. Dionne

WASHINGTON — All that talk about George Bush's impending landslide is enough to make you think the 1992 election is going to be organized along pre-glasnost Soviet lines. The president is invincible, the Democrats are hapless, there will be no excitement, so why bother?

You would never know from this that Americans sense that the country is on the wrong track, according to all the polls.

Nor would you imagine that people have just gone through a recession, faced collapse in a sector of the banking system, suffered from waves of murder, drug abuse and family breakup in the cities, wondered, how long the health care system would hold up and worried that America just can't back it against foreign competition. Won't these questions come up during the 1992 campaign?

The problem with the way most Americans are looking at 1992 is that they assume that all that is at stake is whether Mr. Bush will win — an awfully one-dimensional view of democracy. Because campaigns have been so empty for so long, people seem to have forgotten that elections are also supposed to be occasions when citizens try to figure out where their country has been and where it should be going — to figure out, in other words, how to solve some problems.

The interesting thing about the 1992 election is that it comes at a time of real ferment in thinking about politics and public policy. Not only are voters tired of the same old stuff, but so are politicians and policy gurus.

For Democrats, the question is: Will they continue to be the

party that never misses an opportunity to miss an opportunity, or will they have the good sense to try something new? Whatever you think of the Democrats' chances, they will really stand no chance at all if the debate lingers along at its current pace on the issues that Mr. George Bush chooses to put before the country.

If the debate is over "no more new taxes" and not over who to raise them on and who to cut them on, the Democrats lose. If the debate is over incremental changes in the federal budget rather than what people really want the government to do, the Democrats lose again. The Democrats strike out if the campaign is dominated by talk about racial quotas rather than by a broader discussion about how to improve the job opportunities, education, training and health care of all Americans.

Note that the Democrats are in trouble even before foreign policy. President Bush's strong suit, gets into the equation.

In short, the challenge for Democrats is to use this campaign the way they have not used past campaigns: to try to alter the terms of debate.

Mr. Bush took a lot of grief over the kind of campaign he ran in 1988. It was, indeed, a rotten campaign, but in truth the dismal nature of the dialogue owed a lot to the Democrats' abject failure to hold up their end of the debate.

"The problem for the Democrats is that we've had this series of one-shot campaigns," says Jeff Faux, president of the liberal Economic Policy Institute. "All the dedication and sweat and tears is an investment in nothing.

It only becomes an investment in something if you're defining ideas people believe in."

There are actually some Republicans and conservatives hoping that the Democrats really will try to shake things up. They worry that the president's seeming indifference to domestic policy is not only bad for the country but also bad politics.

"If Bush doesn't take the initiative in these areas," said Stuart Butler, director of domestic and economic policy studies at the conservative Heritage Foundation, "then he basically gives the Democrats an opportunity to try out things in a low-key way, to see what works and then to go with it."

After years of ignoring what government might do to solve problems, conservatives like Housing Secretary Jack Kemp, Education Secretary Lamar Alexander and Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan are trying to figure out what energetic conservative government might look like.

And many Democrats are starting to understand that unless they find ways of making government work better, popular confidence in the whole liberal project will continue to decline.

Mr. Faux notes that last year's budget deal expiring in 1993, the 1992 campaign is the right time for a challenge to the Bush administration's priorities. For a decade, conservatives in the White House have raised against federal spending and "big government," while usually backing away from real cuts in popular programmes, notably Social Security. The Democrats might enjoy a campaign in which they called the Republicans' bluff, challenging them to put up real

spending cuts or to shut up about "big government."

And to such a campaign, Democrats could reinforce a point that helped them politically during last year's budget crisis: that, unlike Republicans, they are willing to tax the rich more in order to tax the middle class a little less.

Democrats could then move to discuss what government should be doing to encourage Americans to invest in themselves. Expanding student loans is one place to start.

Consider this idea, increasingly gaining ground among Democrats: Guarantee that students who get into college can get a loan at a non-usurious interest rate, which would ease the worries of a great many middle-class parents, and encourage them to pay back the loans with time instead of money — as cops, teachers, doctors in poor neighbourhoods — which would show that Democrats understand that getting public help carries responsibilities.

The country also needs a debate about health care. Three broad approaches already are available: scrapping the current system in favour of a government-financed "single payer" system along Canadian lines; requiring all businesses to provide health insurance for their employees; and (a Heritage Foundation suggestion) ending the tax breaks now enjoyed only by people whose companies buy them health insurance, and using the proceeds to help everyone buy insurance.

There are political risks to endorsing any of these approaches. But what kind of a democracy is it if it doesn't give the voters some chance, through the electoral de-

bate, in shaping a new health system that will affect everyone?

Democrats need to reassure the country of their minimal competence in foreign affairs. But at the moment they would be doing well if they simply got the country talking about domestic problems.

The Democrats' deepest difficulty is that they are so shell-shocked from presidential election defeats that they have lost the gift that used to be their party's greatest asset: a proclivity for experimentation and creativity. Democrats in Congress have been so locked in by divided government and budget constraints that until very recently they have been more concerned with thinking "practically" than thinking boldly.

The New Deal was a very experimental period — for every two policies they tried, they rejected five," says Celsa Lake, a Democratic poll taker. "Because they had a lot of plans on the table, they could reject and cut loose from ideas that didn't work." Democrats need to start putting things on the table again.

Conservatives could improve the tenor of policy discussion by arguing, as Dr. Sullivan and Mr. Kemp often do, that solving social problems requires not only money but also an emphasis on "character" and personal responsibility.

It will be objected that modern media campaign makes it impossible for anyone to talk in a serious way about serious problems. But my bet is that voters are frustrated enough over failure to solve domestic problems that a candidate who spoke plainly and substantively would have a chance at capturing the popular imagination. — the Washington Post.

U.N. chief sees basis for deal over hostages

(Continued from page 1)

U.N. contacts with the kidnappers on behalf of the Israeli government.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar did not say who Israel would send to Geneva for the meeting Wednesday, but there was no indication anyone other than Mr. Lahrami and Mr. Bein would be tapped.

"Of course it is worth continuing contacts," Mr. Bein said earlier of the discussions with the U.N. chief.

Tehran Radio accused Israel of blocking resolution of the crisis by insisting on the return of the seven soldiers.

But the radio also suggested the crisis may be near a solution anyway because the captives have served their purpose — raising awareness of Israel's brutal policies.

The White House adopted a low profile on the hostage situation Tuesday, saying the United States has played no direct role in negotiations but has no objection to a deal by others.

"We have nothing new to report," said White House spokesman Doug Davidson when asked about reports of the behind-the-scenes deal.

"Our policy is that we will not negotiate for the release of hostages," Mr. Davidson said, "but we will not tell others what to do" if they were willing to make a deal.

Despite the official U.S. policy, President George Bush as recently as Sunday publicly prodded Israel to release some Arabs now in prison. Although he did not identify Israel by name, Mr. Bush's definition of innocent captives held in the region applied to some held by the U.S. ally.

A Palestinian group said it was willing to swap the body of an Israeli soldier for Arab prisoners held by the Jewish state.

"We have the body of Sergeant Samir Assad of the Israeli army and we are willing to conduct negotiations through the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) to exchange it with Arab prisoners held by the Israelis," said a spokesman for the Democratic Front for the

Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). The DFLP said Sgt. Assad, one of the seven Israelis missing in Lebanon, was captured alive but killed in an Israeli air raid.

The DFLP spokesman said Sgt. Assad was killed during an Israeli air raid on a DFLP position on Rabbat Island near the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli.

The spokesman said the DFLP had nothing to do with the issue of Western hostages and the Israeli soldier, captured in 1984, had been held as a prisoner-of-war.

"We oppose hostage taking. The Israeli soldier (whose body) we hold...was captured when Israeli occupation troops were attacking Palestinian position in southern Lebanon," the Damascus-based group's spokesman said.

The spokesman said an ICRC representative visited the captured Israeli before he was killed and a video-taped interview with him had been sent to his family as well as several letters.

Freed hostage Tracy has decided to return to the United States, officials said Tuesday.

Mr. Tracy, 63, has undergone two days of psychiatric and physical testing at a U.S. air force hospital in Germany after being freed from a five-year captivity Sunday.

John Woodhouse, spokesman for the hostage release media centre in Wiesbaden, said Mr. Tracy would be leaving for the Boston area Wednesday morning, accompanied by medical personnel and a State Department team that has been debriefing him.

A day earlier, Wiesbaden hospital chief Earl W. Ferguson said Mr. Tracy will likely require psychiatric counselling to help him make the emotional transition from captivity to freedom.

"I anticipate that that will be necessary in the future for him, just like it is for many hostages," Colonel Ferguson said at the time.

After his release, Mr. Tracy was disoriented, stumbled and had trouble completing sentences.

News reports in Israel suggested it was being asked by the United Nations to free some Arab prisoners, thereby paving the way for the release of Western hostages and Israeli servicemen.

Israel has long insisted it would only free Arab prisoners once its seven servicemen are released or their remains are returned. This week, Israel appeared to show more flexibility — including a willingness to consider releases in exchange for an accounting of its missing men.

On Monday, the U.N. chief seemed encouraged about the Lebanese kidnappers' letter. He said that after reading it he was "a little more hopeful than before." But when asked if he thought an end to the hostage crisis was near, he said: "I would not say near but nearer than before."

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens also said he saw reason for optimism because the kidnappers were seeking U.N. mediation.

"The fact that this organisation of the extreme Shiites says it is ready to reach a deal, and that the secretary-general has come into the picture, gives an opening for hope," he said.

He denied news reports that Israel was already negotiating a trade.

Israel and its Lebanese militia allies hold about 400 Lebanese detainees. Israel also holds nearly 9,000 Palestinians in the occupied territories.

The letter from Islamic Jihad, the group holding Americans Terry Anderson and Thomas Sutherland and Briton Terry Waite, was carried out of Lebanon by Mr. McCarthy.

The letter said freedom for the captives depended on the release of all detainees worldwide, including those in Europe and occupied Palestine.

The letter did not identify the detainees, but they are believed to include Arabs held in the occupied territories, two Lebanese brothers jailed in Germany and another Arab imprisoned in Switzerland.

Alert at New York nuclear plant

(Continued from page 1)

second-highest level of emergency.

The NRC has four levels of emergency. A general emergency is the most serious, followed by a site area emergency. The next level is an alert, followed by an unusual event.

Peter Slovic, a spokesman for the state disaster Preparedness

commission and the State Health department, said officials were notified about 6:20 a.m. (10:20 GMT) that enough power had been restored at Nine Mile that technicians could tell the reactor was being shut down safely.

"We all breathed easier at that point," Mr. Slovic said.

The Nine Mile Point plant is on the shore of Lake Ontario about

50 kilometres north of Syracuse. It is owned by a consortium of utilities in New York and operated by Niagara Mohawk.

About 1,000 people are employed at the plant.

Niagara Mohawk, which also operates natural gas, hydroelectric, coal and oil-burning plants, serves nearly two million customers in upstate New York.

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that by the year 2000, over 90 per cent of AIDS cases will occur in Third World countries where Western — allopathic — medicine is either unavailable or unaffordable, and nearly 80 per cent of the population is primarily treated by traditional healers: indigenous health workers who inherit their naturally-based remedies from ancestral practices.

According to WHO, traditional healers are using folk medicines with some success in treating AIDS-related illness in all its regions, particularly China and Africa. The organisation has long acknowledged the potential value of traditional healers in contributing to health care services in developing countries. One of the objectives of its Traditional Medicine Programme, established in 1976, is "to explore the merits of traditional medicine in the light of modern science in order to maximise useful and effective practices and discourage harmful ones ..."

Now the AIDS pandemic is stimulating international dialogue and research on alternative (non-Western) treatments for HIV disease. The collaboration between modern scientists and traditional healers investigating naturally-based therapies that are benefi-

dial, cheap and can be delivered with little technical support will have global implications for treating HIV infection and illness.

Researchers are optimistic that important discoveries for the treatment of HIV disease will be made when traditional medicines are systematically studied. Of 110 plant-derived drugs in professional use throughout the world, two-thirds were investigated, subsequently synthesised, and marketed because of their reputed benefits in traditional practice.

Traditional healers are more than dispensers of medicines. Respected as teachers and makers of public opinion in their communities, their valuable role in AIDS prevention and care is still untapped. And for those ill with AIDS, the counselling and spiritual comfort they provide can never be scientifically quantified.

A Kenyan woman (who recently died from the disease) wrote: "I am taking medications they give me at the pharmacy. They are very expensive, but I always save enough money to go to my traditional healer. She makes me feel easier and sometimes her medicine helps when nothing else works. I have also taken my two daughters to her for counselling and I know she will help them when I am gone."

In the North, too, there is new

interest in alternative treatments, as both the scientific community and people infected with the virus face the sober truth that Western science has yet to discover a cure for HIV infection or a lasting and benign treatment for AIDS.

While the investigation into alternative therapies is merely a pragmatic choice for some, for many people AIDS illuminates the urgent need for mankind to use the full breadth of the planet's intellectual resources to address the disease — whether wisdom comes from the Nigerian bush, Brazilian rainforests, Arizona Indian pueblos, laboratories of the U.S. National Institute of Health or from behind the Great Wall of China.

Green Cross, Inc. is a U.S. NGO committed to examining the healing traditions of all cultures and finding common elements that are accessible to Western scientific inquiry.

According to its journal "Ancient Roots: a modern medicine," which published a cross-cultural discussion on AIDS in 1990, "We are forging ahead with a common heritage and a common purpose: to join our ancestors' medicine with our modern scientific knowledge and pass this amalgamation onto our children." — World AIDS



Herb seller in Lusaka: Part of a popular culture (File photo)

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U.S. closes gap on Cuba's Pan Am gold advantage

HAVANA (R) — If Haystacks Calhoun ever sat on him, he'd just be a grease spot on the rug. He wouldn't even make a decent meal for Andre the giant. But here comes Brad Penrith, 125, 1-2 pounds (57 kilograms) and the biggest thing in wrestling.

Penrith pulled off one of the biggest upsets of the Pan American Games Monday, beating world champion Alejandro Puer to Cuba in freestyle wrestling and leading the U.S. team to seven gold medals.

"This is probably the most phenomenal performance in wrestling during the games, and, considering where it happened, maybe the most phenomenal performance in U.S. wrestling in the last two or three years," said U.S. World Champion wrestler John Smith, also a gold medalist.

The United States won two of three matches with Cubans and, along with a five-race sweep by U.S. swimmers, led the onslaught on Cuba's gold-medal advantage in the games.

"Everyone the wrestlers, the baseball team, the divers, the trainers — is saying, 'I'm glad the swimmers are here. We need more gold,'" said Ashley Tappin, a 16-year-old U.S. swimmer who opened the competition by win-

ning the 100 freestyle. With six days left in the games, the United States led Cuba in overall medals 266-223, but still trailed in golds 113-99.

The U.S. men's basketball team took another step toward the gold with a 114-68 victory over Uruguay, earning a spot in the semifinals against Puerto Rico Thursday. The other semifinal will match Cuba against Mexico. The gold medal game will be played Saturday.

America's baseball team beat Nicaragua 5-4, and the United States also had two boxers in action. Patrice Brooks won at 132 pounds (60 kilograms) and Aristide Clayton lost at 119 (54). The United States still has seven of 12 boxers in contention for medals.

Kevin Jackson, at 180½ pounds (81.5 kilograms), also beat a Cuban, Orlando Hernandez, 2-0, while Chris Campbell, a 36-year-old lawyer who wrestles at 198 pounds (89.5 kilograms), lost a 2-1 decision to Cuban Roberto Limonta. The Cuban scored at 1-point takedown for the victory with 23 seconds gone in overtime.

Afterwards, Campbell said that he suspected Limonta was "5-10

pounds (2.5-5 kilograms) overweight, and that would give him quite an advantage."

U.S. coach Bobby Douglas said the Americans had threatened to protest that the Cuban team was not following proper protocol in weighing in its wrestlers, "but they came back and cleaned it up, and we're satisfied now."

While the wrestlers sent their best team to the Pan Am Games, the swimmers didn't. It didn't much matter on the first night of swimming competition.

The United States' five gold medals included Pan Am records in the men's 200 freestyle by Eric Diehl and in the women's 800 freestyle relay. Diehl's time of 1:19.49, 49.67 seconds shaved 22 off the record, and the team of Natalie Norberg, Barb Metz, Jane Skillman and Lisa Jacob broke the other mark by nearly two seconds in 8:11.47.

Tappin and Megan Oesting scored the only 1-2 U.S. sweep in the women's 100 freestyle. Immediately after their victory over Uruguay, the U.S. men's basketball team left for Miami once again to practice until their game against Puerto Rico.

Tracy Murray led the U.S. team with 16 points.

Chang overcomes Pernfors, Rostagno beats Garrow in Volvo International

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut (AP) — Michael Chang overcame a surprise attack by Mikael Pernfors and a possible third-set letdown for a win in an upset-free first day at the Volvo International.

Pernfors, known primarily as a baseline player, went to the net after losing set 6-3 and caught Chang off-guard.

"I wasn't expecting that and he was able to capitalize on quite a few points," said Chang, the 10th seed.

When Chang couldn't power the ball past Pernfors, he floated it over him and eventually won, 6-3, 5-7, 6-2.

In other first-round matches Monday, ninth-seeded Derrick Rostagno, the defending champion, mixed power hitting with off-speed shots to keep Brian Garrow off balance as he won 6-3, 6-4, no. 11-seeded Petr Korda of Czechoslovakia overcame a slow start to beat Jean-Philippe Fleurian of France in straight sets and 13th-seeded Omar Camporese of Italy defeated Australian Wally Masur 4-6, 6-4, 6-4.

Fifteenth-seeded Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands had nine aces en route to a 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory over South Africa's Christo Van Rensburg, and 16th-seeded Marc Rosset of Switzerland beat Australian Mark Woodforde, a semifinalist at the

Volvo International last year, 6-4, 6-2.

Twelfth-seeded Cristiano Caratti of Italy was the only seed out of the tournament. He withdrew because of stomach cramps before his first match.

The successful march of favorites was a contrast to last year when a slew of seeded players, including Chang, Ivan Lendl and Brad Gilbert, were beaten early. Only one seed made it past the quarterfinals.

But the only thing that upset Chang Monday night was his inability to hit passing shots past Pernfors.

"Every time I'd hit it, he'd be there. It was strange. I don't know whether he was getting in fast or I was reacting slow, but something wasn't working well for me," Chang said. "He covered the net really well."

Pernfors jumped to a 5-2 lead in the second set. So Chang changed his tactics and started lobbing successfully over Pernfors. He stayed off set point four times and tied the set at 5-5.

"I thought I was going to win in straight sets, but he hit some good shots and I missed some," Chang said.

Pernfors gave up just one point in the final two games, including breaking Chang on straight points to take the second set.

Chang was worried about a



Michael Chang

letdown, but won five straight games in the final set en route to the victory.

"I just tried to get going fast in the third set and it seemed to work good," Chang said. "I'm happy with the way the match went."

World Championships is new ballgame for Burrell

MALMO, Sweden (AP) — Leroy Burrell has held the world 100-metre record since June 14 and has a 3-0 edge over U.S. teammate Carl Lewis in head-to-head meetings in that distance this season.

But he's not over-confident as he prepares for his first world championships. The meet starts in Tokyo on Aug. 24.

"It's nice to go into the worlds with a winning streak, but anybody can beat me," Burrell said. "There are so many good sprinters out there."

"It's a totally different race. There are so many factors involved. Anything can happen. Everybody will be extremely motivated."

Burrell, who also qualified for the 200 in Tokyo, beat Lewis in back-to-back 100s last week in this southern Swedish city and in Zurich, Switzerland.

It would be a confidence booster for most sprinters, beating perhaps the most experienced sprinter in history three straight times before the most important race of your career.

"But it doesn't necessarily mean that," Burrell says. "The worlds is so much bigger than Grand Prix meets. It's not a confidence booster if you haven't been through it before."

"I haven't been to a World Championship yet, so I don't really know what's going to happen. I just hope that I can go there and run as fast as I can. If that happens there is a really good probability that I win."

Winning is something Burrell has done a lot in the past two seasons. Last year, he won 19 of 22 finals in the 100, defeated Lewis in the Goodwill Games for the first time in six meetings and capped his first No. 1 ranking.

After setting a world indoor mark at 60 metres (6.48 seconds) during a brief European season in Madrid Feb. 13, the Santa Monica Track Club speedster kept on winning. He improved the winning times in his last four 100-metre races before clocking a

world record 9.90 in the U.S. Championships in New York.

Burrell may have the edge on Lewis now, but "you just can't count Carl out" in the 100, the world's fastest man says.

Lewis, the only sprinter to win two Olympic and one World Championship 100-metre gold medal, thinks he will be ready for Tokyo.

"I haven't run a good 100 this season and I'm counting the nationals," says Lewis, who had a 9.92 behind Burrell in New York two months ago.

Lewis, who returned to Houston from a European tour in July to recover from the flu and tight hamstrings, ran his sixth 100 of the year at Zurich. He is not expected to run any more before the worlds.

"It's not a matter of enough or not enough," he says. "You have to be prepared no matter if you have 50 races or six races for the world championships. That's really where the focus is."

Lewis, as usual, has been able to close his races very well. But his starts were less impressive in the European races.

Burrell, who credits a lot of box drills for making him more explosive out of the blocks, also has been inconsistent at the start in his recent races.

"Sometimes I hit the gun. Sometimes I'm out last," he says.

Ben Johnson, who used to be extremely fast out of the blocks, will not be competing in any individual race in Tokyo, having finished fourth in the Canadian trials struggling all season long as a drug-free sprinter.

Burrell won't miss Johnson, who was banned two years after testing positive for steroids in the 1988 Olympics.

"The sprints have been dominated for the past two years by two very good athletes who deserve a lot more attention than a sub-par Ben Johnson," Burrell says. "There are several high school kids who can run his time. I don't think the guy deserves the attention he gets."

Jordan to attend Asian volleyball talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian Volleyball Federation (JVF) will take part in the meetings of Asian federation due to be held in Thailand in September.

JVF spokesman Shawqi Al Abdullat told the Jordan Times that Mr. Taiseer Arafat, the JVF president, is expected to represent Jordan in these meetings which will deal with Asian events and its fixtures.

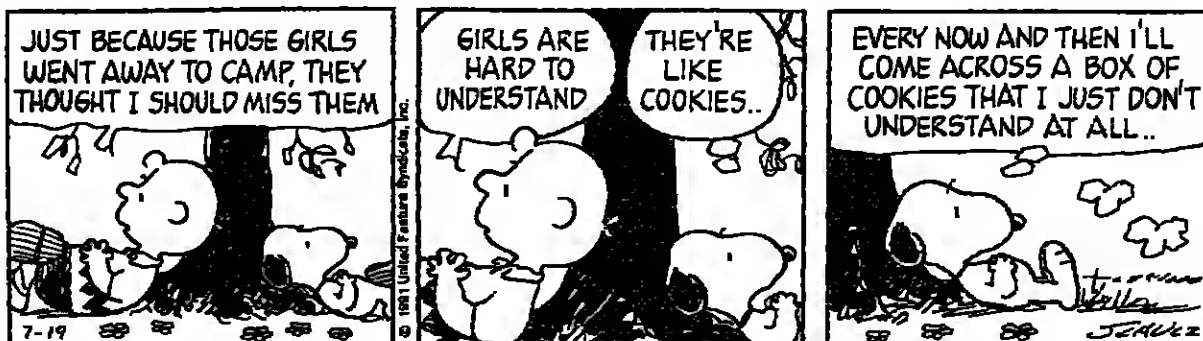
He said that the JVF asked the Iraqi federation to organize series of friendly matches between the Jordanian national team and leading Iraqi clubs next September and approved an invitation extended to Al Salam Sporting Club, Iraqi women's league champions to visit Jordan and meet Jordanian national women's team in August.

England drops bid to host World Cup

LONDON (R) — The English Football Association (F.A.) have dropped their bid to host the 1998 World Cup and decided to seek the 1996 European Championship finals instead.

"We have decided not to proceed with our World Cup bid," said F.A. spokesman Glen Kirton.

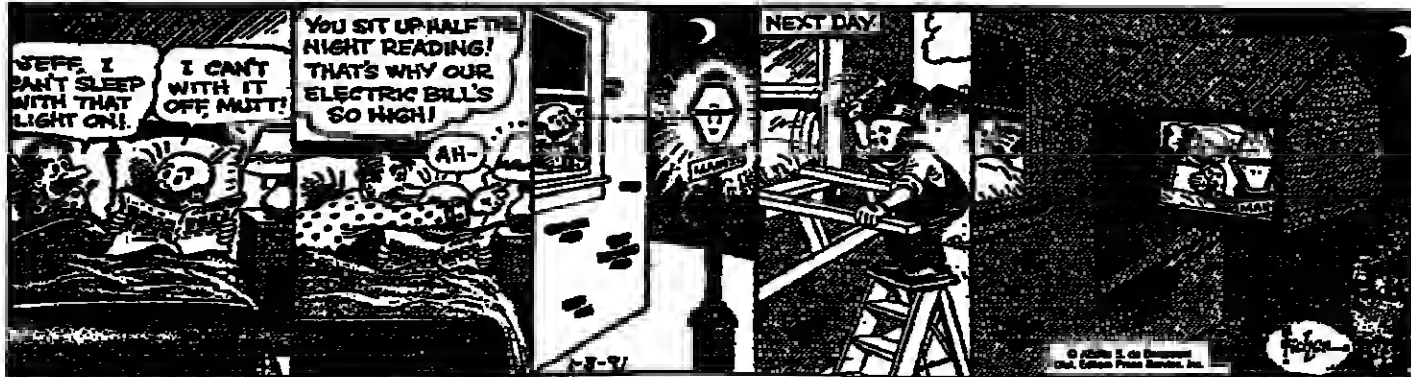
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Basuki wins at Slims of Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES (Agencies) — Tenth-seeded Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia defeated Germany's Claudia Porwick 2-6 6-2 6-4 in the first round of the \$350,000 Virginia Slims of Los Angeles women's tennis tournament.

Top-seeded Monica Seles of Yugoslavia, who regained the world's number one computer ranking Monday from Germany's Steffi Graf due to the system's complicated mathematics, faces South African Elna Reinach in the second round. The top eight seeds received first round byes in the 56-player, hardcourt tournament.

Second-seeded Gabriela Sahanini of Argentina, who retired from her semifinal match at the Canadian Open last week due to a blister, is scheduled to start

against the winner of the match between South African Ros Fairbank-Widder and American Patricia Hy.

South African Amanda Coetzer upset 14th-seeded Regina Rajchrtova of Czechoslovakia 6-4 7-5 in a first round match.

Three British players were beaten in the first round, as Reinach eliminated Clare Wood 5-7 6-1 6-3 and both Monique Javer and Sara Gomer were beaten in straight sets.

Basuki, who has won two tournaments and increased her ranking from number 273 to number 39 this year, squandered a 5-0 third set lead against the 90th-ranked Porwick but hit two opportunistic forehand service return winners at 5-4 to close out the 90-minute match.

McEnroe beats Pearce; Bryan upsets Jarryd at U.S. Hardcourt Tournament

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Patrick McEnroe has grown accustomed to the questions and the answers come easy for John McEnroe's younger brother.

Patrick, 25, has seen his brother climb to the No. 1 world ranking while winning four U.S. open and three Wimbledon titles. He's also seen the temper tantrums and struggles the veteran is having as a 32-year-old.

"I'm not expecting to take John's place. I just do what I do regardless of what happens with John," the younger McEnroe said Monday after his 7-5, 6-1 victory over Brad Pearce in the opening round of the U.S. Hardcourts Tournament.

"Comparisons are inevitable, but it's not my goal to step in his shoes or replace him," said the younger McEnroe, whose brother won the hardcourts here in 1989 after losing to Boris Becker in the 1988 title match.

McEnroe, seeded 12th here, is currently ranked No. 35-20, positions behind his brother.

"Our styles are also different," said McEnroe, who, unlike his brother, is a right-hander. "I do my own thing and don't worry about John."

Always known as a consistent donkey player, the younger McEnroe has climbed steadily after finishing 1990 ranked No.

120 in singles. He reached the semifinals of a Grand Slam event for the first time in Australia, and in March lost to his brother in an emotional championship match in Chicago.

McEnroe moved into a second-round match against Italian Stefano Pescosolido, who beat Rick Leach on Monday 6-3, 6-3.

"Australia really helped to improve my confidence," McEnroe said. "It's time for me to push and do better on a consistent basis."

In the big upset of the opening day, wild-card entry Steve Bryan ousted 11th-seeded Anders Jarryd of Sweden 7-6, (7-3), 6-1.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY AUGUST 14, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Wright Fox GENERAL TENDENCIES: Take some time out now to show you do value the good will of influential men, both conventional and New Age in concept that are closely tied to your everyday activity. Develop your designs.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The other end of the spectrum maintains optimism.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) Forget working those get one of whom you are to do what you want essential you are not all other peoples concerns.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You certainly a good friend unless you at interest in what helps de less preoccupation with hopes and wishes.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 21 to December 21) You can good will and active back who is in high office unless make a special point to their rules.

CAPRICORN: (December 21 to January 20) Whatever you have or changes you make forget about them do what is required and can make them much is

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Attend strictly to you have agreed to do a that tendency to be so t able and eccentric by o ples viewpoint.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you have any kind sions pending with part pons and get them in be now or you find they late give you much troubles.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Take some time out to show you can build a new material well-being for yourself by loping off unnecessary expenses and showing do value an experts opinion.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) That personal wish that means so much to you may seem way at

Your birth stone = Success

World Resources: Dajani & Co. Inc. Amman, Rio De Janeiro, Jewellers: Gerni Amman, Amra Hoss-Sin, corda

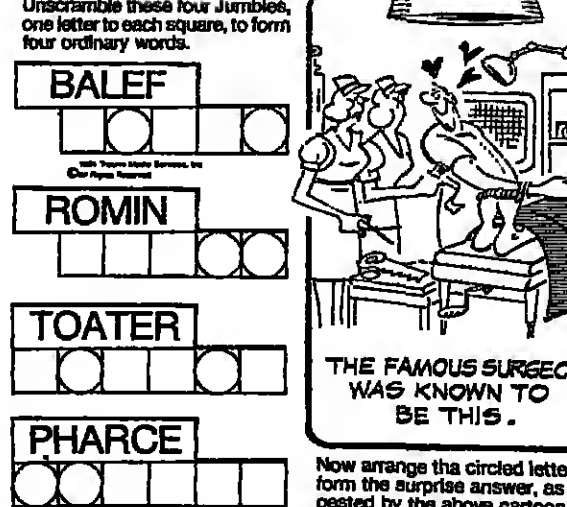
THE BETTER HALF. By Ba



"There's no need to hurry — it's time to meet S so that means we have another hour of window-shopping left."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD G

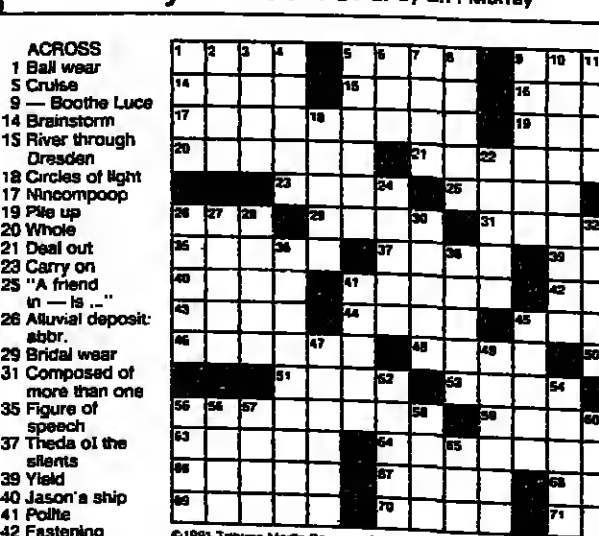
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



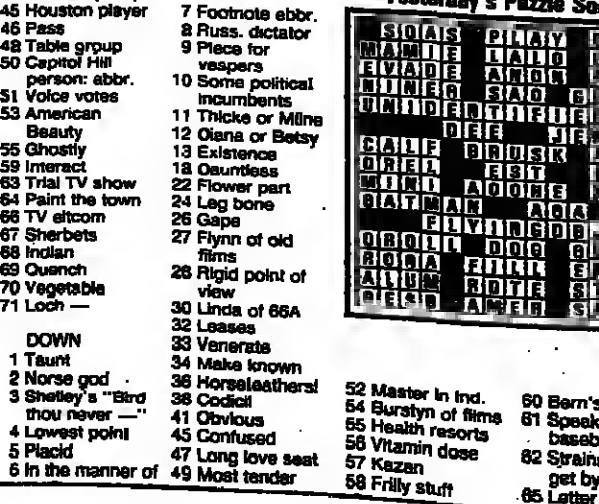
Answer here: A "BIG" (Answers 10m)

Yesterday's Jumbles: STUNG ABIDE COUPLE TOWARD Answer: A short "cutting" remark may be expressed as "BLUNT" WORDS

THE Daily Crossword by C.F. Murray



Yesterday's Puzzle Sol



Financial Markets

Jordan Times
In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date: 12/8/1991	Tokyo Close Date: 13/8/1991
Sterling Pound	1.6976	1.6978
Deutsche Mark	1.7246	1.7235
Swiss Franc	1.5057	1.5085
French Franc	5.8673	5.8655 **
Japanese Yen	135.50	136.45
European Currency Unit	1.7885	1.7891 **

* USD Per STG
** European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

Barren Currency Interest Rates Date: 13/8/1991

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.82	5.66	5.81	6.12
Sterling Pound	10.81	10.81	10.67	10.56
Deutsche Mark	9.12	9.31	9.25	9.30
Swiss Franc	7.68	7.75	7.75	7.68
French Franc	9.37	9.50	9.67	9.75
Japanese Yen	7.37	7.37	7.09	6.87
European Currency Unit	4.66	4.67	10.00	10.05

Interest bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 million dollars in equivalent

Precious Metals Date: 13/8/1991

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	357.65	8.45	Silver	3.35	.045

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 13/8/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.667	.667
Sterling Pound	1.1664	1.1772
Deutsche Mark	.3944	.4004
Swiss Franc	.4555	.4575
French Franc	.1171	.1177
Japanese Yen	.5035	.5056
Dutch Guilder	.3533	.3551
Swedish Krona	.1096	.1101
Italian Lira	.0531	.0534
Belgian Franc	.01922	.01932

Other Currencies Date: 13/8/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7850	1.8000
Lebanese Lira	.0750	.0770
Saudi Riyal	.1825	.1835
Kuwaiti Dinar		
Qatari Riyal	.1662	.1670
Egyptian Pound	.2000	.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7450	1.7600
UAE Dirham	.1662	.1670
Greek Drachma	.2550	.2650
Cypriot Pound	1.4250	1.4550

Per 100

CAR Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	10/8/1991 Close	12/8/1991 Close
All-Share	108.42	108.74
Banking Sector	106.16	102.64
Insurance Sector	116.74	118.62
Industry Sector	114.79	114.95
Services Sector	127.02	126.97

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.6945/55	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1450/55	Canadian dollar
	1.7270/80	Denishmarks
	1.9420/30	Dutch guilders
	1.5090/97	Swiss francs
	35.58/62	Belgian francs
	5.8630/80	French francs
	1294/1295	Italian lire
	136.60/70	Japanese yen
	6.2750/2800	Swedish crowns
	6.7500/50	Norwegian crowns
	6.6800/50	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	357.00/357.50	U.S. dollars

Saudi 1990 exports increase by 56%

NICOSIA (R) — Saudi Arabia's 1990 exports rose by 56.5 per cent to 166.34 billion riyals (\$44.36 billion), official figures released Tuesday show.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said the kingdom's imports during the same period increased by 13.8 per cent to 90.14 billion riyals (\$24.04 billion).

Foreign goods reexported from Saudi Arabia represented 1.5 per cent of the export total, standing at 2.41 billion riyals (\$643 million).

Exports of chemical and plastic products accounted for 5.7 per cent of the total at 9.5 billion riyals (\$2.53 billion), minerals 1.54 billion riyals (\$409 million), and agricultural products 835 million riyals (\$222 million), SPA said.

Saudi exports to Arab League members increased by 108 per cent, to non-Arab Islamic states by 85 per cent, to North America by 49 per cent, to Latin America by 124 per cent, to western Europe by 35 per cent and to eastern Europe by 266 per cent.

Food imports amounted to 12.62 billion riyals (\$3.36 billion), electrical goods 14.78 billion riyals (\$3.94 billion), cars and spare parts 7.96 billion riyals (\$2.12 billion) and gold and jewellery 6.21 billion riyals (\$1.66 billion).

The United States accounted for 16.7 per cent of the kingdom's imports and 24 per cent of its exports.

Japan came next with 15.3 per cent of imports and 19 per cent of exports, followed by Britain with 11.3 per cent of imports and 1.6 per cent of exports.

TAIB reports slight drop in net profit

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — Trans-Arabian Investment Bank E.C. (TAIB), a Bahrain-based bank, has said its 1990 net profit declined slightly to \$4.87 million from \$5.07 million the previous year.

TAIB said in an annual report its 1990 operating income slipped to \$11.6 million from \$12 million in 1989. Its expenses fell to \$3.9 million from \$4.6 million during the same period.

Like other banks in the area, TAIB saw its assets drop sharply as business confidence wavered immediately after Iraq's last year invasion of Kuwait.

EC predicts world 1991 economic growth slowing to 1.5%

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Commission predicted Monday that world economic growth, excluding eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, would slow to 1.5 per cent in 1991 from 2.4 per cent last year.

But the European Community's (EC's) executive said the global economy was likely to turn around later this year. It forecast that growth in world gross domestic product (GDP) would recover to 2.8 per cent in 1992.

"On the whole the chances of a progressive recovery of the world economy are positive," the commission said in one of its periodic reports on economic development.

"The first signs of recovery in the industrialised economies now in recession are becoming evident," it noted.

It was the first commission forecast this year of world GDP. The figures do not take into account a projected five to 15 per cent fall in output this year in central and eastern Europe or a worsening of the economy of the Soviet Union.

The commission predicted that economic activity would pick up to some extent in eastern Europe during 1992, although it did not give figures. But it was more pessimistic about the Soviet Union.

"In the absence of clear and credible prospects of major structural reforms, the risk is that the Soviet Union's economic difficulties will go on getting worse," it said.

Record stocks likely to rise further on London Metal Exchange

LONDON (R) — Metal stocks on the London Metal Exchange (LME) may be poised to rise further after hitting a record high of 1,057,223 tonnes Friday, trade sources say.

"There is no glamorous reason for stocks to be so high," said an LME spokesman. "Consumers are not picking up metal and the producers are still producing it. We are in a recession."

A rise of over 35,000 tonnes in stocks of copper, tin, lead, zinc, aluminium and nickel took the total past the previous high of 1,039,747 tonnes set in October 1983 at the trough of the previous and much deeper world recession.

Industry analysts say metal stocks are a delayed indicator of the economic fortunes of industrialised countries and significant stock cuts may not be seen until well into 1992, despite the recovery now under way in key Western economies.

But Robin Bhar, analyst with brokers Carr, Kitchin and Aitken, said he would be happy to see metal stocks even higher than current levels because of a radical change in the structure of the world market since the previous recession.

He said supply and demand were much more finely balanced than in the early 1980s when there was huge overcapacity in metal production. World copper stocks currently represent about five weeks of consumption, compared with 13 weeks in 1983, said Nick Moore, analyst with Ord Minnett Mining Research.

Aluminium stocks would cover around nine weeks of consumption, compared with 11 in 1983 and 17.6 weeks in 1982.

The change is due to higher consumption than a decade ago and a move by major users such as the vehicle industry to carrying minimum stocks, he said.

The relative shallowness of the current recession will also speed a recovery in metal markets, Mr. Bhar added.

He said the U.S. economy did not have as great an influence on world metal markets as previously — accounting for 30 and 25 per cent, respectively, of aluminium and copper consumption in 1991, down from about 41 and 28 per cent in the mid-1970s.

This meant that the 1990/91 slump had proportionally less impact on demand, with newly industrialising countries more than quadrupling their base metal consumption during the 1980s.

Taken together these factors mean metal markets should see a gradual recovery from the present recession, Mr. Bhar said.

Iranian foreign exchange reserves reach \$16 billion

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said Monday its gold and foreign exchange reserves had risen by 63 per cent to \$16 billion in the year ending March 20.

Central bank governor, Mohammad Hossein Adeli, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said the reserves had reached 1,112.5 billion riyals from 680.0 billion. A dollar was officially worth 69.7 riyals Monday.

In an upbeat report on Iran's economic performance, the central bank also said oil revenue rose 45 per cent during the year, imports jumped 71 per cent, the budget deficit was cut by half and inflation fell to a single digit rate.

Tehran Radio quoted the report as saying promoting production was the main plank of the government policy during the year, the first full year since President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's economic reforms were implemented.

Mr. Adeli said the government, gradually lifting import and price controls imposed during the 1980-88 war with Iraq, had stimulated output, especially in machine tools, metals and chemical products.

Iran pumped an average 3.1 million barrels per day (b/d) of crude oil and exported 2.2 million b/d during the year, he said.

It sold the oil at the average price of \$20 a barrel, up from \$16.70 the year before, largely as a result of the squeeze on supplies caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

This works out a total oil export revenue of \$16.06 billion, compared to \$11 billion in the previous year when production stood at 2.9 million b/d and exports at 1.8 million.

The report said oil exports earned Iran another \$1.4 billion, up from \$1 billion.

But imports shot up 71 per cent to \$21.9 billion, near the level in 1983-84 which was Iran's record import year since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Neither Mr. Adeli nor the report explained how Iran increased its reserves during a year in which imports exceeded exports by some \$4.5 billion.

Mr. Adeli said government revenue, boosted by higher oil revenue and a 42.7 per cent rise in tax receipts, rose 77.4 per cent to 5.63 trillion riyals.

Most of the increase, however, was due to government sale of dollars to importers at a new floating rate close to the black market rate which is about 20 times the official parity.

The policy, vigorously followed

under President Rafsanjani, amounts to a devaluation of the rial whose official value was kept artificially high in the high-deficit war years.

With three different sets of exchange rates affecting the government accounts, it is impossible to put a precise dollar figure on government revenue.

Mr. Adeli said government expenditure rose 64 per cent to 6.31 trillion riyals.

This left a deficit of 675 billion riyals, about half the previous year's figure and much lower than the level envisaged in the five-year programme to March 1994.

The Tebran stock exchange registered a six-fold increase in share trading to 65 billion riyals, Mr. Adeli said.

The inflation rate dropped to nine per cent from 17.4 per cent in the previous year, Mr. Adeli said, below the 10 per cent profit paid on bank deposits under Iran's Islamic banking laws.

Total bank deposits, mostly long-term savings, increased by a quarter to 18.85 trillion riyals, he added.

Despite the official inflation figures, newspapers are full of complaints about soaring prices as the government cuts subsidies of an increasing number of goods and services to reduce the budget deficit.

Two big American banks announce \$4b merger plan

LOS ANGELES (R) — Two U.S. banks are planning the biggest merger in the history of the now-troubled U.S. banking industry, a \$4 billion deal designed partly to help make American banks better able to compete globally.

The planned takeover by BankAmerica of California rival Security Pacific, announced Monday, will create the second-largest U.S. bank. The deal is subject to approval by regulators and stockholders.

The merger is the third combining U.S. banking giants in less than a month as the industry consolidates in the face of losses stemming from the recession, bad loans from a soured real estate market and growing global competition.

The proposed stock swap will ensure BankAmerica's position as the second-biggest U.S. bank. It is the third time in a month that two U.S. bank giants have announced plans to merge.

"We intend to build on the strengths of both institutions to create a highly profitable new banking enterprise that will become pre-eminent in the United States and even better positioned on a global basis," said BankAmerica chairman and chief executive officer Richard Rosenber, who will retain his title.

"But size isn't the measure of success," he added, noting that the merger is "part of the process necessary to make U.S. banks more competitive in the world again."

The wave of giant bank mergers are coming at a time when President George Bush is pressing Congress for bank reforms. The administration says they are essential to let banks diversify so they can improve their profitability and compete against European and Japanese banks.

San Francisco-based BankAmerica said the purchase, approved Sunday by directors of both companies, would give it a total of about \$190 billion in assets and equity capital of about \$12 billion.

With \$84.7 billion in assets last year, Los Angeles' Security Pacific ranked as California's second largest bank and the fifth-biggest in the United States.

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EMBASSY OF INDIA, AMMAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

To mark the Independence Day of India, a flag hoisting ceremony will take place on **Thursday, August 15, 1991 at 10:00 a.m.** at the Embassy of India, First Circle, Jabal Amman. All Indians are cordially invited to attend the ceremony.

American Community School

The American Community School announces a new programme for 4 and 5 year olds for the 1991-92 school year. The new K-1 and K-2 class will provide a developmental programme with appropriate learning activities for each age group. The emphasis will be on presenting creative lessons designed to allow the pre-school and kindergarten age child to develop socially, physically, emotionally and academically in a positive environment.
Classes will be five days per week from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. A reduced tuition and capital assessment rate will apply. Bus transportation is available for an additional fee.
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Duties and responsibilities: Controls and monitors the operation and performance of computer hardware and software. Provides assistance and support in selection, analysis, design and implementation of suitable software applications. Provides on-the-job computer training staff and prepares training materials. Prepares annual budget concerning computer requirements.

Qualifications: Degree in Computer Science plus formal training in data processing. Minimum five years experience in data processing including three within a large mini-computer environment. Two years experience necessary in the preparation and presentation of data processing training materials. Good knowledge of written and spoken English.

Applications: Interested candidates are invited to submit a detailed U.N. Personal History Form, available at UNRWA Offices in Jordan, showing current qualifications and experiences, not later than 19 August, 1991 to:

Head of Administration, UHB (A) AVN-A/3/91 UNRWA Headquarters Branch (Amman) P.O.Box 484 — Amman, Jordan

N.B. First priority in appointment will be given to fully qualified staff members; second priority to fully qualified external Palestinians.

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RAINBOW

TOM SELLECK — IN
RUNAWAY

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France proposes U.N. meeting, EC initiative on Yugoslavia

PARIS (R) — France has proposed a United Nations Security Council meeting and asked the European Community (EC) to arrange for political talks among Yugoslavia's feuding republics, French diplomatic sources said.

The sources said Foreign Minister Roland Dumas discussed a possible Security Council meeting with U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in Geneva Monday.

The U.N. chief had not rejected the idea and said the world body's charter could offer some ways of tackling the Yugoslav crisis, they said.

They said Mr. Dumas had written to Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek, current president of the EC Council of Ministers, suggesting the EC resume contacts with Yugoslavia.

Mr. Van Den Broek said Monday the EC might consider setting up an international conference on Yugoslavia if the warring factions there fail to agree to talk among themselves.

Mr. Dumas wants the EC to offer to arrange a constitutional conference for the six Yugoslav republics, the sources said.

Yugoslav leaders have told the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) they would ask for EC help to open constitutional talks.

The EC last week called for world efforts to restore peace in Yugoslavia after its peace mission between Serbs and Croats collapsed. An official ceasefire has since been declared in Croatia but has been shaken by continuing clashes.

Yugoslavia's Serb-Croat conflict in Croatia is spilling into the cities where Serbs who do not even identify with the fighting complain of harassment but have nowhere to run.

"Every time I have to show my documents I feel I am looked on with scorn and suspicion," said Mirjana, a young widow in the cosmopolitan Croatian capital Zagreb. She is a Croat but was married to a Serb.

"I feel like divorcing my dead husband and taking back my maiden name," she said.

Zagreb's large Serbian minority, many of them businessmen and intellectuals, say they are being blamed for ethnic clashes in rural parts of the republic, where Serbian guerrillas are trying to stop Croatia leaving Yugoslavia.

Milan Djukic, president of the recently-founded Serbian People's Party in Croatia, said many urban Serbs do not even identify directly with the guerrilla fighting — but they are suffering its results.

Mr. Djukic said urban Serbs were being sacked en masse from their jobs or pressured into swearing oaths of allegiance to an independent Croatian state. Some Serb businesses had been attacked with bombs.

One member of Croatia's parliament demanded 10 Serbs be sacked for every policeman killed by Serbian guerrillas.

More than 300 people have died in fighting in Croatia and neighbouring Slovenia since the two republics declared independence on June 25. Most have died in Croatia, where members of a 600,000-strong Serbian minority want to stay in Yugoslavia.

Death toll keeps rising in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Six more people were killed overnight in South African townships, raising fears of fresh factional warfare, but police said Tuesday the scale of political unrest was dwindling.

Police said the hacked and stabbed bodies of four men were found in Alexandra township north of Johannesburg over the past 24 hours. Ten people were killed Saturday and Sunday.

Two more blacks were killed in fighting in the Natal province township of Naibini.

Police and independent moni-

toes say incidents of political unrest dropped sharply recently, although the death toll from these incidents rose.

They said 5,307 incidents of political unrest, resulting in 1,281 deaths, were reported during the first seven months of the year. In the same period last year, there were 10,056 incidents and 980 deaths.

A spokesman for outgoing Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok said more readily available firearms such as automatic rifles were one cause of the rising death toll.

The Independent Board of In-

quiry (IBI) and police said the nature of fatal incidents had also changed.

Before, their spokesman said, the tendency had been for individual targets to be selected. Now organised groups were intent on systematically eliminating rival groups.

"It is no more a band of 100 rioters causing death and destruction, it is now five to 10 people selecting their target carefully. That is why we have the death toll rising while the number of incidents themselves drop," the IBI said.



Pope John Paul

Pope begins visit to Poland

KRAKOW, Poland (AP) — Pope John Paul II returned Tuesday to his former diocese to start a visit to his native Poland and Hungary to promote Roman Catholic values in the former Communist Bloc.

The Pope arrived from Rome on a special Alitalia DC-9 flying the flags of the Vatican and Poland for his second visit to his homeland in three months. He travels to Budapest Friday for the first visit ever by a Pope to Hungary.

He was greeted by President Lech Walesa, Polish Prime Minister Jozef Gierek and other church and government leaders. The smiling pontiff seemed comfortable among old friends as he extended personal greetings to each dignitary.

Pope John Paul did not kiss the ground on arrival, as he traditionally does, because the trip is considered an extension of his fourth pilgrimage, a nine-day, 12-city tour in June.

Thousands of people lined his route through historic Krakow, many waving Vatican flags or carrying balloons bearing the Pope's image.

Barbara Baron of Krakow held aloft her French poodle puppy for its first view of the pontiff — it was her fourth — and said, "it's very important. This is our compatriot."

"Because he is from Krakow, this is a magnificent experience for us," added her friend, Maria Lesniewska, who brought her grandmother.

The focus of this visit is the sixth Vatican-sponsored World Youth Day, expected to draw hundreds of thousands of young Catholics to Czestochowa, site of the Black Madonna icon and Poland's holiest shrine.

HAVANA (R) — Cuba might be prepared to open up its one-party Communist system to multi-party politics if the United States ended its long-standing hostility towards the island, the president of Cuba's parliament has said.

But National Assembly President Juan Escalona, who is also a member of the ruling Communist Party's Central Committee, told a news conference in Havana this possibility would not be on the agenda at the party's fourth congress next Oct. 10.

"At this time, when we are passing through one of our most difficult moments ever, we do not think it's the right time to open up cracks in the structure we have," he said.

In answer to a question, Gen. Escalona, who still holds the rank of army general and is a former justice minister, said he believed there was no philosophical reason why socialism and multi-party politics could not exist together.

Asked when this might happen in Cuba, he replied: "The day that the Americans see sense and become rational ... when we



Hungry Albanian refugees stretch out their hands while waiting for food distribution at a stadium in Bari, Italy.

Italy steps up food aid to Albania

ROME (R) — Italy stepped up emergency food shipments to Albania Tuesday in an effort to prevent a new exodus of refugees after last week's flood of asylum-seekers.

Italian President Francesco Cossiga announced he would go to the Albanian capital Tirana later Tuesday to see for himself the situation in Europe's poorest country.

Three Italian planes loaded with food were due to leave for Albania following a pledge by Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis that Italy would cover its impoverished neighbour's basic food needs from September to November.

The aim is to give Albania's agriculture time to recover from the collapse of the state farm system. In Bari, southern Italy, several hundred Albanians — the last of about 17,000 refugees who swamped Italian coastal towns

last week — remained barricaded in a football stadium, refusing to go home.

Most of the refugees have been sent back to Albania and police said they did not plan to use force to deport those still in Italy.

"We have asked the Albanians to provide a list of what they need," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. The latest Italian food aid is worth \$85 million.

Two Italian Air Force transport planes landed with the first supplies Monday as Mr. De Michelis flew in to Tirana where he made his statement on food aid. The Italian military will set up distribution centres.

An Italian military mission was due in Tirana Tuesday to discuss the details and to work out how the Italian and Albanian navies should jointly patrol the Albanian coast to prevent any more refugees breaking out. Last week's exodus took place after

desperate crowds stormed ships in Albanian harbours and forced them to sail across the Adriatic to Italy.

This is the first time since World War II that Western military forces will have been allowed into Albania, which remained a sealed dictatorship until it was caught up in the collapse of East European communism after 1989.

Mr. Cossiga is the first Italian head of state to visit Albania since the Italian army withdrew in 1943 after its wartime occupation. Referring to the Italian invasions of Albania in 1914 and 1939, Mr. Cossiga said last week that they had given succour to the population.

In Tirana, Mr. De Michelis stressed Italy was not seeking a return to its past role in Albania. "Albania is not our protectorate and we are not treating it like a younger brother," he said.

IRA election worker killed in N. Ireland

BELFAST (R) — A Protestant gunman shot dead an election worker for the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) political wing in a village roadside ambush in Northern Ireland.

It was the fourth killing in the British province in a week, raising fears that Northern Ireland could see another deadly round of "tit-for-tat" sectarian shootings. Belfast was also hit by a spate of Republican rioting.

Shanaghan, who survived a murder bid two years ago, died instantly when a gunman ambushed him, opening fire on his van which crashed into a ditch, police said.

He was an election worker for Sinn Fein, political wing of the IRA which is fighting to oust Britain from Northern Ireland.

The IRA killed a Protestant election worker in Londonderry Friday when tension began mounting again in the province.

The Ulster Freedom Fighters, an outlawed group battling to keep Northern Ireland British, admitted responsibility for the killing in a statement to the media.

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Laos assembly approves constitution

VIENTIANE (R) — The old-guard revolutionaries of Laos, meeting in the capital Tuesday to approve their first constitution in nearly 16 years of power, declared their destitute country had achieved a "magnificent victory."

The draft of the constitution presented to a three-day meeting of the People's Supreme Assembly contained no reference to socialism, but confirmed the leading role of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, the country's only legal political group since the 1975 Communist takeover.

After approving the constitution, the parliament will appoint a new national president and prime minister, the current premier and undisputed party chief, Kaysone Phomvihane, told reporters.

National elections will be held by the end of this year or the beginning of next, he said. Diplomats strongly expect the

assembly to name Mr. Kaysone, a sprightly 71, the new national president. His current portfolio would be taken by defence minister and army chief, General Khamthay Siphandone. Other ministerial changes are anticipated.

It will be the most substantial shake-up yet of one of the world's most durable and secretive hierarchies and would follow the pattern of presidential leadership adopted by Vientiane's ailing ally, the Soviet Union, diplomats said.

Last week leadership changes were announced in Vietnam, Laos's neighbour and staunch Socialist mentor.

Although the Lao presidency has been a largely ceremonial position, diplomats say Mr. Kaysone would reinforce rather than reduce his influence by taking it.

Mr. Kaysone, a veteran revolu-

tionary who fought for decades from the jungle in the name of Indochinese Communism, said socialism remained a goal, but a distant one.

"It depends on the people — and now the people want popular democracy," he said.

Many ordinary people in Vientiane appeared indifferent to or unaware of the changes going in their name.

"A constitution? That is government business, it has nothing to do with me," said one young man who did not want to give his name.

Officials of government ministries were unable to name any of the politburo members at the assembly.

Mr. Kaysone and Gen. Khamthay, who is in his late 60s, entered the capital's new parliament building arm-in-arm and sat together during the opening speeches.

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Kaifu ends China visit; arrives in Mongolia

PEKING (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu arrived in Mongolia Tuesday, planning to pledge economic aid to help the struggling landlocked nation adopt a market economy.

Mr. Kaifu, who spent four days in China before travelling to the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator, is to hold talks with Premier Dashin Byambasuren and meet President Punsalmaagiin Ochirbat.

Mr. Kaifu is the first Japanese leader to visit Mongolia.

Prior to leaving Peking, Mr. Kaifu briefly met with Premier Li Peng at the Diaoyutai state guesthouse. Mr. Kaifu was the first head of an industrial power to visit China since the bloody crackdown on the pro-democracy movement in June 1989.

Chinese and Japanese officials said Mr. Kaifu's visit marked the return to normal relations between the two countries, clearing the way for increased cooperation on global issues.

Japan had joined Western democracies in imposing sanctions against China to protest the violence, but since last year has led efforts to end Peking's isolation.

The Japanese were particularly pleased with China's announcement that it would sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. China was the last of the world's

five declared nuclear powers to agree to terms of the 1968 treaty that limits transfer of nuclear materials.

Mr. Li made the surprise announcement in talks with Mr. Kaifu during the Japanese leader's first day in Peking.

Official Chinese media have reported that China has agreed to let Mongolia ship its foreign trade through the port of Tianjin on the east coast of China.

The agreement is essential for Mongolia to develop the trade it needs with Japan and the West to carry out its switch from a centrally planned economy to a free-market one.

Previously, Mongolian exports and imports went through the Soviet Union, adding weeks of transportation time and increasing costs. Most of Mongolia's trade had been with the Soviet Union and East European allies.

But after ousting their hardline Communist government last year and electing a multiparty government, Mongolia has turned to Japan, South Korea and Western countries for aid, trade and investment.

Mongolia has begun converting state-owned stores and factories to private operation and trying to develop a free-market economy. For many Mongolians, the country's economic adjustments have been painful.

Tokyo bones thought to be remnants of war experiments

TOKYO (AP) — Dozens of fragmented skulls and thigh bones unearthed at a Tokyo construction site are kept locked at an undertaker's storage. Mysteriously, the government just wants to dispose of the human remains, not identify them.

Historians think they know the reason why: The bones were uncovered where Japan's Military Medical School stood during World War II and could be the remains of prisoners who died in germ warfare experiments in northern China by the shadowy Unit 731.

"Considering the cooperation between the Medical School and Unit 731, the bones are highly likely to be the remains of Chinese and Russian war prisoners killed and shipped from China after the germ experiments," said Keiichi Tsuneshi, a history professor at Kanagawa University.

Japan has been accused by Asian nations of playing down or denying atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers during World War II. The government has never denied the existence of the unit, but has never publicly acknowledged the nature of the experiments.

The bones of 35 bodies were dug up in July 1989 in the busy Shinjuku District, on the site where the Health and Welfare Ministry is building a new National Institute for Health.

The Military Medical School that used to stand there is believed to have worked as a secret centre of Unit 731, a secret regiment headed by Lt. Shiro Ishii.

Based in Harbin, China, the

notorious unit injected war prisoners with typhus, cholera and other diseases as part of its grisly research into germ warfare, historians and ex-members of the unit say.

It also reportedly induced gangrene, performed human vivisections and froze prisoners to death in endurance tests.

Prof. Tsuneshi and other researchers believe the Medical School's Laboratory of Preventive Medicine was used to store documents and specimens from the unit's human victims.

Police investigator Kenichi Eguchi told parliament earlier this year that the uncovered bones were of men and women who died at least 20 years ago. The remains were only checked to determine if they belonged to victims of violent crime, and he said no such evidence was found.

The Health and Welfare Ministry has twice refused requests from Shinjuku Ward to conduct tests to identify the remains by sex, age and race, said ward official Koichi Negishi. Three research institutions, including the National Science Museum, also have refused.

"We thought it was only appropriate for (the ministry) to investigate and react more seriously because the bones may be related to the unit," Mr. Negishi said.

"We have no obligation to investigate just because we own the land," explained ministry official Nobuhisa Inoue. "Police have already said there is no crime involved, ... so at this point, the bones should just be buried."

Thailand urges U.S. to find temple killers

BANGKOK (R) — Thailand has urged the United States to make a priority of finding the killers of six Buddhist monks and three other people in a Thai temple in Arizona, a government spokesman said Tuesday.

The massacre Saturday of six monks, an elderly nun and two novices at the Wat Promkumaram Temple in Phoenix, Arizona has stunned Thailand, where monks are deeply revered, and cast a pall over Monday's celebrations of Queen Sirikit's birthday.

The nine victims, most of them Thais, were shot execution-style in the back of the head or neck. Arizona police have found no motive for the slayings.

"All Thais are saddened by this case," Foreign Minister Arsa Sarasin told reporters after a reception at the Grand Palace Monday evening.

Mr. Arsa has asked the U.S. embassy that special attention be given to solving the crime, which he called the worst violence against the Thai community in the United States.

He said he would contact Arizona Republican Senator John McCain, who has close ties with South East Asia.

The massacre has dominated Thai newspapers, which speculated the killing were racially motivated.

"This has shocked Buddhists the world over," the leading Matichon newspaper said in an editorial Tuesday.

"It is unbelievable that monks, the symbol of the Buddhism, can become victims of a cruel murder."

The victims were sprayed with birdshot and then shot in the head or neck after being forced to lay down in an execution-style killing, a medical examiner said Monday.

The method of the weekend killing raised fears among the 5,000 Thais, Cambodians and Laotians and some religious leaders living in the area that the murders were the work of racists, possibly people who resented the influx of Asians.

Authorities in Phoenix, a sprawling city of 1.5 million people, believe the killings occurred early Saturday and the Wat Promkumaram Buddhist Temple, the second-biggest in the United States.

Police said they did not yet know the motive but had ruled out robbery, retaliation or Asian gang activity.

The dead, mostly from Thailand, included a 16-year-old novice, Matthew Miller, and his 71-year-old grandmother, Foy Sripanpiasert, the nun.

Police said Monday that a witness had seen a late-model Ford car with tinted windows leaving the temple early on Saturday morning.

Dr. Heinz Karmitschnig, the local medical examiner, said four of the victims were hit by birdshot blast.

COLUMN

Saudi prince in contempt of court, fined \$100 a day

ALEXANDRIA, U.S. (AP) — A federal judge ruled Saudi Arabian Prince Faisal Yazid Abdullah Al Saud in contempt of court and imposed a \$100-a-day fine for failing to explain why he hasn't reimbursed a businessman for \$166,000 in bounced checks. A lawyer for Manassas businessman Chawky B. Jabali said the sum is a pittance for the prince but a financial catastrophe for his client, who fears he will be killed if he goes to the prince's palace in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to collect. "It's a David-Goliath sort of thing," Washington lawyer Joseph Drennan said. "These princes can do whatever they want. There have been cases in the past where naive creditors have gone over there trying to collect debts and suffered the consequences." The order by U.S. district court Judge T.S. Ellis called Prince Faisal's failure to show up for a July 16 deposition on the case "inexcusable" and noted that the court tried to reach him via fax machines, his embassy and his post office box in Riyadh. The daily fines begin Tuesday and will continue until the prince gives his deposition, the order said. The Saudi Arabian embassy and Saleem Samman, the prince's lawyer in Plymouth, Michigan, did not immediately return calls seeking comment. Jabali's troubles began in 1985, when Prince Faisal recruited him to sell telecommunications equipment and help him set up a mobile telephone company, Drennan said. The prince paid him with two checks totalling \$166,000. The checks bounced, Drennan said. "He worked over there for a year and a half and got paid with some bad paper," he said. "The joke's on him." It was no small sum for Jabali, who now works for an insurance company in Annandale. "My client is not well off and has four children," he said. "It caused some considerable hardship." Jabali sued the prince and in February 1990, won a punitive civil judgment of more than \$240,000 which included reimbursement and interest.

\$250,000 Bentley hits the road

NEW YORK (R) — Americans who can afford to kick out a quarter of a million dollars for a car now have a bigger choice with the entry of a new Bentley listed at \$249,000. Bentley Motors, the British maker of luxury cars that is owned by Rolls-Royce, introduced its latest model in the United States, the first in more than 40 years that has not shared a body with Rolls. The Continental R is a sleek, two-door, turbo-charged creation whose list price of \$249,000 is exclusive of sales tax and dealer's charges. Powered by a 6.75-litre V-8 engine, the Continental R can go from zero to 60 mph in fewer than seven seconds. Killjoys in Bentley's Engineering Department have added an electronic limiter to keep the car from speeding past 115 mph. It comes with a cellular telephone that stretches to the back seat, headlight washers, heated seats and "a concert hall quality audio system with compact disc player and 10 speakers." Air-conditioning is standard. Howard Mosher, president of Rolls-Royce Motors Inc., said the car was "a logical extension of our plan to develop the Bentley line to broaden our market beyond the traditional Rolls-Royce buyer and to separate the two marques (brands)." Rolls-Royce bought Bentley in 1981. Since the 1950s the two have been different versions of each other.

Rats delay Air India flights

NEW DELHI (AP) — Rats have delayed recent Air India flights, and the aviation minister has said the state-owned airline plans to eradicate them despite religious concerns by some Hindus who worship the rodents. Madhav Rao Scindia told parliament that flights to Tokyo, New York and London were delayed in the last month when rats were found in the aircraft. In another case, a flight from Muscat, Oman, to after rats were discovered on board, Mr. Scindia said. The minister said rat-control measures are regularly carried out in the airport hangars, the cabin catering building and cafeteria elevators. In Hindu mythology, the elephant god Ganesha is depicted riding on a rat. There are temples dedicated to the rodents in the desert state of Rajasthan, and in the eastern city of Calcutta.